

Bhagwan
Dev Atma



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA
1928.

Bhagwan Dev Atma

BY

P. V. KANAL

M.A., LL.B.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

Bhagwan Dev Atma—the most worshipful Founder of the Dev Samaj and the discoverer and teacher of the One True Science-Grounded Universal system of religion for all mankind—lived an ideal life on this earth. He was born with the heredity of unique powers which he evolved under suitable environments and making phenomenal sacrifices and renunciations and surrender of all his physical, material and mental powers. The highest psychic forces, which he ultimately evolved and which completed his soul-organism, are the following :—

(1) Complete and all-sided love for all that is true in all relations of man.

(2) Complete and all sided love for all that is good in all relations of man.

(3) Complete and all-sided hatred for all that is untrue in all relations of man.

(4) Complete and all-sided hatred for all that is wrong in all relations of man.

It is these grandest, most glorious and absolutely wonderful powers which alone can complete soul-organism and make life ideal.

This ideal life, possessed of the highest senses of love for truth and goodness and absolute repulsion for untruth and wrong was and is something utterly incomprehensible to millions of men possessed of happiness-based low-loves and low-hates. Hence the present humanity, instead of warmly greeting such a unique manifestation, took up an attitude of violent opposition to him and engineered horrid processes of persecuting and prosecuting Bhagwan Dev Atma and not only threatened to take away his life, but actually made murderous attempt by firing pistol shots at him, which form the most gloomy chapter of humanity's history. But this was natural. Did not Herbert Spencer write in his famous book "Education":—

"If by any system of culture an ideal human being could be produced, is it not doubtful whether he would be fit for the world as it now is? May we not on the contrary suspect that his too keen sense of rectitude and too elevated standard of conduct would make life intolerable or even impossible."

Herbert Spencer was quite right in his calculations, but he little knew that such an Ideal being had actually appeared on this earth in the person of Bhagwan Dev Atma. The life of highest psychic senses and the ideal standard of conduct which Bhagwan Dev Atma lived, really made life intolerable for him. But these mighty and most glorious forces carried in their very texture the elements of triumph. Hence though Bhagwan Dev Atma suffered most acutely at the hands of thousands of human beings for whose highest good he worked

with phenomenal energy, his achievements have been also none theless grand and most glorious.

The story of the evolution of such a unique life cannot fail to be of utmost interest and profit for all *adhikari* (fit) souls, as that is the only type which the humanity must follow, if it is ever to come out of the throttling yoke of the all happiness-based low-loves and low-hates which march man straight to untold miseries, absolute disharmony in all relations, soul darkness and soul annihilation.

We offer this short biographical sketch of Bhagwan Dev Atma and the brief outline of his teachings, with a marked consciousness of our imperfections and want of ability, but with an honest conviction that it would serve as a precursor for fuller and more complete life sketches of such a unique personality by some abler hands.

It is proposed to publish this biography in parts, every part covering a specific period of Bhagwan Dev Atma's life. This first part is at present offered to the public, and the others would follow as circumstances permit.

Lahore

December 1929.

Author.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Two editions of this book have already been published. They were printed in separate parts. The Managing Council of the Dev Samaj which is its supreme executive body and the also Trustees of Bhagwan Dev Atma's Charities Trust decided to issue this third edition in one volume. This biography of Bhagwan Dev Atma is a record of the evolution in thought and life of that unique manifestation. It is therefore definitely distinguishable from the biographies of the world which are few after all and the record of the life and achievements of *Munush Atma*—very few of whom attained to the altruistic stage—only Bhagwan Dev Atma's biography is therefore a unique document.

It is true that to do justice to Bhagwan Dev Atma's life and his teachings geniuses are required who besides basking in Bhagwan Dev Atma's light must possess vast learning and extraordinary abilities. We claim none of the personal capacities of the geniuses. Our only great privilege lies in the fact that we have had the blessedness of sitting at the feet of Bhagwan and directly learning some great facts about him from his *Dev Bani*. This unique privilege is not a small factor in preserving in words the direct knowledge we got from him. We have tried as faithfully as possible to confine ourselves to Bhagwan's printed *Dev-Bani* or his unique utterances.

We feel it also a unique privilege that Bhagwan Dev Atma while departing for *Dev Lok* laid a holy injunction on us to write his biography which should not be less than 500 pages. We then assured Bhagwan Dev Atma that this most precious record of his life and teachings would one day run into thousands of pages and any number of volumes and that is our present conviction too. In fact we have

written a short account of Bhagwan's life and teachings. The present biography consists only of the positive side of his life. We have said nothing of the unique sacrifices which he had to pass through in the great war, he waged against the reign of untruth and wrong and the phenomenal struggles he made to establish the reign of truth and goodness. It is our deep and earnest desire to write on that phase of his unique life if we are spared to do so.

We offer this new edition with a deep and humble prayer that it may help fit human souls to realise the uniqueness of Bhagwan Dev Atma and profit by his life and teachings.

P. V. KANAL.

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PART I
G E N E A L O G Y

GENEALOGY.

It was on the 20th of December, 1850 A. D. or *Poush Badi Pratipada* (Lunar month) of 1907 B., when the moon was about to retire after full night's vigil and the Grand Solar Luminary of our planet was about to rise on the horizon, that our Most Worshipful Lord, Bhagwan Dev Atma—the future Luminary of the Soul World—was born at Akbarpur, a town in Cawnpur District in the United Provinces of India. He comes from the Aryan stock of the ancient and illustrious *Kanya Kubj* Brahmans. In the Epic of the world-renowned poet and author, Balmiki—whom the European savants remember as the Homer of India—there is a legendary lore recorded of how this class of *Kanya Kubj* Brahmans originated. It is said that “Brahma,” the traditional Hindu god of creation, had four grandsons. The second among them had one hundred daughters, all of whom were *Kubji* or *Kubri*, i.e. hunchbacked. All these girls were given in wedlock to a Mahrishi named Brahma Dutt, who is said to have subsequently cured them of this defect by his healing touch. The place of residence of this Mahrishi came consequently to be called *Kanya Kubj*, afterwards known as Kanauj. It is said that from the 72 Rishies of this part of the country, known as *Kanya Kubj*, descended the 72 sections or *Gotras* of *Kanya Kubj* Brahmans. Six among these 72 *Gotras* are reckoned as the highest in the scale of caste. From one of these six highest *Gotras* is descended the long line of Bhagwan Dev Atma's ancestors. It is called *Upmanu*. This genealogy, shrouded though it is in the veil of traditional lore and half truths, reveals at least the fact that the highest ancient authority recognized Bhagwan Dev Atma's ancestry as great and glorious.

The ancestors of Bhagwan Dev Atma originally resided at Rewari, a town of the United Provinces in the District of Fatehpur (Hasua). Rewari is situated at a distance of 2 or 3 miles from a station named Malwan on the East Indian Railway. This town was founded by one of the ancestors of Bhagwan Dev Atma by name Shriyut Rev, son of Shriman Janardhan. It was in Rewari that Shriyut Rev performed a grand and memorable Yagya ceremony (अग्निहोत्र यज्ञ) or Sacrificial Ritual. Since it was performed at an extraordinary scale, it earned him the distinguished honour or title of Agnihotri. From that day onward the descendants of Shriyut Rev have been surnamed Agnihotri. The family originally bore the surname of *Duivedies* of *Jairajmon* and accepted *Yajur Ved* as their Chief Scripture and *Dhanur Ved* as their *Up Ved*.

But after some generation when the family grew in numbers and property, certain members moved to Doulatpur, where they owned large landed property. Several generations after Shriman Pandit Rev, was born Shriyut Pandit Mansaram. He had three sons named

Shriyuts Ganga Parshad, Sukhram and Bechulal. The eldest among them, Shriyut Pandit Ganga Parshad was the great grandfather of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

Shriyut Pandit Ganga Parshad was a man of uncommon mental powers, and possessed vast energy for work, great statesmanship and perseverance. By dint of personal resourcefulness, hard work and genius, he made a mark in business, acquired name and fame, and rose to a post of high eminence and became Dewan or Minister of Raja Sarupsingh of Akori—a small State (now defunct) near Akbarpur. This new post necessitated his change of residence from Doulatpur to Akbarpur in the District of Cawnpore. It was during his tenure of office as a Dewan that he purchased zamindari (ownership) of 25 villages and thus became a great landlord. These purchases were made by the Dewan *Benami*, *i. e.* formally in the name of some of his relations, a step which brought about complications after his demise.

The following is the list of the villages in which the Dewan Sahib owned large landed property :—

1. *In the Tahsil of Bhognipur*.—(1) Shahjahanpur (2) Sahavapur (3) Jagdishpur (4) Moosa Nagar (5) Rasulpur (6) Dobha (7) Asuapur (8) Badhauli (9) Sethra Khurd (10) Dohrapur (11) Bijaipur (12) Hardua Hari (13) Mohtrapur (14) Asewa.

2. *In the Tahsil of Akbarpur*.—(15) Salavatpur (16) Badlapur (17) Serua (18) Alhapur (19) Muktapur (20) Badhapur (21) Kurvan (22) Lahrapur (23) Gauriyapur.

3. *In the Tahsil of Ghatampur*.—(24) Gandatha (25) Amritepur.

Besides this vast landed property, the Dewan Sahib left behind a large fortune in cash also.

II

GRAND PARENTS.

It was in the year 1767 A. D. or thereabout that Dewan Sahib was blessed with the only son, who was named Shriyut Ram Jiawan—the illustrious grandfather of Bhagwan Dev Atma. This child inherited some extraordinary traits of high character. This rich treasure of his soul grew and blossomed with age, and early in life he showed marked signs of a man whose ideal of life was something higher than the objects and acquisitions of the mundane world.

As is but natural, it was the ardent desire of the Dewan that his only heir to his princely fortune should take interest in it. He expected him to develop his great heritage and further add lustre to the family reputation which he had built up, with the very sweat of his brow. But what appeared to his great father a treasure worth preserving and piling up and the glorious object of pursuit, made no impression on Shriyut Ramjiawan. His whole heart was bent upon the good of his soul. Hence from the tender age of 15 or 16 he turned away from or grew indifferent to physical allurements, sensual pleasures, pursuit after fame, name, worldly power, etc., and felt an overwhelming attraction for all such religious exercises as he believed good for the higher benefit of his soul and for acts of unselfish service of others. Hence instead of living at Akbarpur where Dewan Sahib resided and getting training under his personal care, he preferred to live at Doulatpur, and paid no attention to the management of the property. But says Bhagwan Dev Atma: “My grandfather did not hate money, property, etc. He was a married man, had wife and children and looked after all domestic affairs, yet he did not cherish wife, children, wealth, property, sensual joys, name, fame, power, position, etc., as the Ideal of life. He considered the good of his soul to be the prime object of his life. He regarded all other things as mere means to the fulfilment of his prime object. Moved by this real feeling of renunciation, he, on the one hand, considered it highly improper to become a Sanyasi or Sadhu by abandoning home ties, wife, children, wealth, property, etc., and on the other, he did not believe worldly treasures, worldly glory, worldly power, etc. as the prime object of life. Living in the world itself, he did not feel himself as belonging to it and did not hence live for it. Living in the world he made *Dharma* as the supreme object of his life. This was why all the activities of his life were principally motived by this one supreme ideal.” His daily programme was therefore uncommon.

His daily programme.—The daily programme of the life of Shriyut Ramjiawan was quite significant and amply illustrative of his altruistic and higher ideal of life. He used to get up at 2 or 3 a.m. and with rosary in hand engaged himself in the devotional exercise. With his characteristic and profound love for the religious exercise, he

would not let any bodily consideration come between him and his devotion. Hence he would keep a small vessel containing a lotion of pepper near at hand. If at any time he felt drowsy, he would apply a little of it to his eyes which would cause water to flow from them and thus banish sleep. While administering this he would thus address his eyes, "You are interfering with my devotion. Take this as your punishment."

At 4 or 5 a.m. he would attend to his morning calls, take morning bath and then begin his Sandhya. At day break, attended by one or two Brahmans, he would walk 6 miles to the Ganges, take bath there and engage himself in devotion again. On his way to the Ganges he would drop sweetened flour at ant holes in order to feed them. He had appointed some Pandits for writing the name of God "Rama" on paper and rolling these bits of paper in wet flour into pills. He would then throw these pills into the Ganges for fish to eat, as a spiritual exercise. About noon he would return home. In order to avoid all chances of any excess in food, he would take the *weighed and fixed quantity* of food at the *appointed time* and then retire for his afternoon nap. At 3 p.m. he would come to his audience hall, receive visitors and attend to day's business. Having finished that, he would again take bath and thus with clean body engage himself in prayers. Before bed time it was usual with him to go to the stalls, where animals were tied, with the sole object of finding out for himself whether all the animals—horses, cows, etc. had been tied and kept properly, had been fed and comfortably lodged. At nine or ten p. m. he would retire to bed.

This was his fixed and unalterable programme which he carried out throughout his life.

His acts of mercy and service.—Shriyut Ram Jiawan had a very tender heart. He could not bear the sight of any one in penury, want, disease or affliction. He gave charity bountifully to enable people to keep the wolf from the door. Conscious of this noble trait in his life, many a needy person flocked to his door. Many a poor Brahman, who could not afford to get their daughters married owing to extreme poverty, appealed to him with success. Some persons would come in rags with a view to excite his sympathy and get money from him. Others would secure loans which were rarely returned. All this charity or help he gave to those whom he believed to be needy, with the main object that unselfish service of others contributed to the good of the soul. He abstained from every kind of flesh eating including the use of eggs for food, and touched no intoxicants.

His various other good traits.—He was a sincere man. He hated hypocrisy from the core of his heart. He was reputed to be a straightforward and honest soul. He was not only clean in body but clean in all thoughts and actions. He kept his things neat and in order. He was a man of wonderful resolution. Once arrived at any decision, particularly about his religious life, he would stick to it at any cost. He

never let idleness or any other consideration baffle him in his sacred spiritual exercises. He had firm belief in the sacredness of Pilgrimage to various places associated with the names of gods of the Hindu mythology. In those days when there were no Railways, no metalled or good roads, when danger beset every step in travelling even a short distance, when those bound for pilgrimages believed that they were risking their very lives, Shriyut Pandit Ram Jiawan completed the pilgrimages of three most renowned and very distant Holy places, *viz.* Badri Nath in the North, Jagannath in the East and Rameshwar in the South. One more pilgrimage remained and he longed to accomplish it. It was the renowned sacred place called Dwarka. Before he set out for it, he was warned by a learned astrologer that he would never return home alive. He was over seventy when he resolved to undertake this pilgrimage. His relatives did their best to dissuade him from undertaking such a long journey at such an advanced age, and in the face of the prophecy of a learned astrologer. But neither the consideration of his advanced age, nor the fear of death in a remote and strange land, away from all those who honoured and valued his life, weighed anything against his supreme love for the good of his soul. His younger son, the revered father of Bhagwan Dev Atma, followed him for several miles with entreaties to return home. But the great soul of Shriyut Pandit Ram Jiawan, unfettered as it was, by any kind of low or undue attachment, stood unaffected by such persuasions and he did not even look back at his son. After walking a long distance, he however once turned back and addressed his son thus: "Go home; there is no use following me any further." When his son heard these injunctions, he burst into tears, fell at his feet, sought his blessings and returned home.

Accompanied by a maternal cousin and a servant, he wended his way on his last pilgrimage on this earth with one set object to accomplish it.

His end.—Throughout his pilgrimage, Shriyut Pandit Ram Jiawan carried out the settled programme very faithfully. True to his programme he would leave bed at 2 or 3 a.m. and go through his religious exercises. At day break, instead of going to the Ganges he would walk as many miles towards his destination, and instead of taking meals at home he took meals prepared by his cousin. This went on for many days. Once he fell ill. But he soon recovered and was up and going towards the goal of his journey. He reached a place very near Dwarka where he stopped, took his mid-day meal and retired for his afternoon nap. But he did not wake up at the proper time. The time for his Sandhya arrived and yet he did not awake. The attendant approached his cousin and said: "Maharaj should be roused from sleep. It is already very late. See that he does not take us to task that we failed to wake him up in time for his Sandhya." The cousin approached the bed and called out several times. But there was no response. Then he called him a bit more loudly. On this Shriyut Ram Jiawan sat up in bed. His cousin told him that it was time for his Sandhya. But the great man said

that he had done with Sandhya of this world and that he would have it in the next world. He then said:—"You have my gold with you. After my death keep with you as much as is wanted for you both to reach Dwarka and complete return journey but give all the rest in charity. See that you commit no foul play with it, otherwise it will go ill with you." His cousin was bewildered to hear this sudden and strange expression of his master, and hence cried out:—"Cousin what do you mean by this?" But Shriyut Pandit Ram Jiawan returned no reply. He lay down on the cot and covered himself up with a sheet. His cousin felt at sea and burst forth: "cousin! cousin!" But his venerable cousin had gone beyond the human reach. He had grown unconscious. After a while he breathed his last. Thus in the year 1840, at the age of 71, this most remarkable personality left this planet, no doubt without completing his dearly loved pilgrimage. But he left behind, the profound example of a life so sweetly attuned to the melody of higher life that carnal desires and their pleasures jarred most painfully on it in comparison. Such a high soul lives far above the reach of the world's miseries due to the play of happiness—based low loves and low hates.

His cousin and the servant felt deeply shocked by this sudden death of their common master and wept bitter tears. They then performed his last services, cremated his body, paid some money in charity, and after a few days left for Dwarka. They safely reached there, performed their pilgrimage and then began their homeward march. But it seems that greed of gold had caught hold of their souls and in spite of the great warning of their great master, they retained more gold with them than was needed for their return journey. So these greedy people, as was but natural, could not come to a peaceful division of their ill-gotten gold. The result was that they parted company. The cousin did not reach home alive. On his lonely journey he got ill at some place and after some days expired. The servant who arrived safe confessed that the cousin of his master when ill had sent him a message to run to his help. But that the cousin was dead before his arrival. It appears that he took hold of the whole gold. His health and strength reflected in his face showed that he had had a very easy and comfortable home journey. But he did not live long to enjoy the spoils of the dirty game. The gold remained where it was meant to remain (*i. e.* the world) but these two unfortunate men carried in their souls the poison of the swollen greed, too heavy a punishment in the opinion of those who have been blessed with true soul knowledge.

GRAND MOTHER.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's grandmother was born near about the year 1771 A. D. After she entered the sacred wedlock she passed most of her time at Doulatpur with her venerable husband. When he passed away, she shifted her quarters to Akbarpur and commenced living with her eldest son Shriyut Pandit Shiv Dayal. She had two sons and two daughters alive on this earth. The youngest son was the revered father of Bhagwan Dev Atma. She lived for nearly a century

and departed from this earth in or about the year 1868 A. D.

She was a woman of devotional habits and had her daily prayers and worship in consonance with her traditional beliefs. In the months of *Chetra* and *Aswin*, she would keep fast for full nine days consecutively and break her fast only once a day on fruit diet. These nine days she would observe complete abstinence from everything, not letting any of the family even to touch her, and sit all aloof just in the vicinity of the place where her goddess was placed. She was free from every form of jealousy and hatred and quarrelsome nature. She was simple in her daily habits. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma about her :—

“I remember my grandmother along with my grandfather in my daily good wishes. I look upon her with feelings of great respect and reverence. I feel that I would not have been heir to those wonderful psychic virtues of my grandfather if he had not been married to this good woman.”

This pious lady survived her husband for more than a quarter of a century. She lived for a number of years after Bhagwan Dev Atma took his most blessed birth on this earth. He says :—

“My grandmother used to be fond of me. She had got some cash money from her husband. She used to give me something from her savings. When at the age of 15, I was attacked with a virulent form of small-pox she tried to cheer me and pacify me. She lived for a long time. Her body had undergone natural wear and tear, and grown very thin and emaciated. One night all of a sudden and quite unnoticed, she passed away very peacefully in her bed.”

III

PARENTS.

The name of Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan's father was Shriyut Pandit Rameshwar Agnihotri. He was the second son of his illustrious father, his elder brother being 18 or 20 years senior to him. He was born about the year 1817. At the age of 25, his elder brother gave him an old ancestral house, some cash money and a few ornaments from his patrimony. With this very small amount, he started his life afresh. He opened a cloth shop and lent money on interest. As he was good at finance, an intelligent business man and very economical, he soon built a small fortune by dint of his industry and ability and lived the life of a respectable middle class man. He always managed to keep his expenditure within his income and never took loan except under very extraordinary circumstances.

It may be mentioned here that when Dewan Ganga Parshad, Bhagwan Dev Atma's great-grandfather died, he left zamindari of 25 villages and lacs of rupees in cash. But these villages were purchased in the name of his relatives. When the British Administration was established, the lands were entered in the records as the property of those in whose names they were purchased. Hence, these villages passed on to *Benami* purchasers.

All the remaining property came into the hands of Bhagwan Dev Atma's uncle Shriyut Pandit Shivdayal. This gentleman, instead of remaining contented with the large fortune that still remained in his hands and thus living the life of a rich and prosperous man, launched on in fruitless litigation against all those persons who possessed the lands purchased in their names by the Dewan Sahib. This litigation drained the ample resources of Shriyut Pt. Shivdayal terribly. He not only did not get any of the lands retained by *Benami* purchasers, but also brought on a financial breakdown in the family, by his reckless litigation.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's father was a tall man of dignified bearing and of a strong constitution. He possessed clear cut features and fine eyes. He was given to manly exercises, such as riding, and wrestling. Before the Mutiny of 1857, he kept and handled sword and gun with a marked skill. He liked a soldierly dress and smartness. He was a man of wonderful self-reliance and courage.

He was fond of poetry and remembered a number of religious poems and read several poetical works. He loved neatness and order and kept his things well preserved. It is very remarkable and something out of the common that when he died, all the letters of his most illustrious son Bhagwan Dev Atma (and there were several hundreds of them) were found amongst his belongings neatly tied up and every letter bearing the date of its receipt.

He was very sensitive in matters of honour and possessed true self-respect. He was deterred by no fear or consideration of bodily harm or loss in vindicating his honour. Some incidents of his life are quite illustrative and significant of this fact. Once while at Daulatpur, he was riding back from the Ganges when a European seated in a carriage passed by him. Without any sort of provocation given to him by Bhagwan's father, he (the European) made a wanton assault on him and dealt a blow at him with the whip which he (the European) had in his hand. After this cowardly assault, he did not stop there but made his horse run faster. Shri Pandit Rameshwar's righteous indignation was roused at this wanton insult. He forthwith turned his horse's head and followed the wicked man. When he reached the carriage, he belaboured him with one or two sound blows with a hunter and thus paid him in his own coin. The bully had not the courage to come to grips with Bhagwan's father. After that, Bhagwan's father again turned his horse and resumed his journey home.

Once again it so happened that he was returning in a bullock cart from Daulatpur on his homeward journey to Akbarpur—a distance of 40 or 42 miles. He had hardly covered 5 or 6 miles when a *Tehsil-peon*—a Mussalman—came up and said that he meant to take the cart to *Tehsil* as the Government had to send many a cart for war purposes. Shri Panditji told the peon that the cart was a private property of his, and not used for hire, and he had therefore no right to use it for *begar*. But the peon would not listen. He tried to get into the cart. But he was stopped from doing so, as there were eatables kept inside. This exasperated the peon very much and he expressed his determination to take the cart to *Tehsil*. Hence he walked alongside it. After a short time, the peon felt a call of nature. He told Panditji to stop the cart—*i. e.* keep it in waiting till he returned. The cart stopped. The peon went into the jungle to ease himself.

Shri Panditji said to the driver: "I too feel the same need. I am going some distance for the purpose, take the cart very swiftly to a particular village. I won't let the peon advance further. I will settle with him in my own way. Have no care on my score." So saying he went away. The cart too left for the appointed village. After some time the peon came back. He saw Shri Panditji but no cart there. He asked him where the cart was. Shri Panditji told him that it had gone away. This came to him like a bolt from the blue. He got indignant and furious and made an unprovoked assault on Panditji. The latter was ready for this emergency and hence he engaged himself in wrestling with him. Shri Panditji threw him violently on the ground and sat on his chest. But the peon secretly turned his hand and caught hold of Shri Panditji's tuft of hair (*Shikha*) and pulled it so hard that Shri Panditji had to loosen his grip on him. Shri Panditji then turned his own hand to the peon's head, caught hold of his long hair and pulled them very violently, which loosened the peon's grip of Shri Panditji's hair. Thereafter

Shri Panditji gave him a sound exemplary thrashing. Some agriculturists were watching and enjoying all this. When the peon saw these people standing in the field, he cried to them : "Men you quietly see a Government servant being beaten and still would not run to his help." On this, those men came forward and separated them. Thereafter Shri Panditji took up his stick and *lota* and proceeded further. The peon too slowly followed him. When they had gone some distance, and were out of sight of all those who had intervened, Shri Panditji addressed himself to the peon in this strain :— "We had only one wrestling bout. The other still remains. Come forward and let us finish it. During our first wrestling match you could call to your aid some peasants. Here there is none to protect you. Are you ready?" This came like a wintry blast on him. He felt frozen to the spot and did not venture to move a step forward. He stood rooted to the ground and did not move an inch. Then silently he wended his way back. Shri Panditji thus got rid of an annoying pestilence and reached the destined village where his cartman stood ready to take him to Akbarpur. If all Hindus possessed this noble feeling of defending their person and property, we would hear less of that looting, that arson, that cowering under a foul assailant's blows, which has disfigured the public life of India and made communal riots by bullies possible.

Though he was so brave and so dignified, he possessed a truly brave man's forgiving-nature of high order. Syrus truly says "The brave only know how to forgive." In 1857 the Indian Mutiny broke out. The law and order had vanished from the land. The rowdy or criminal element broke into acts of violence of extreme character. The strong and the daring found it a golden occasion to turn into brigand chiefs and rob the weak or their enemies. Shriyut Pandit Rameshwar too had some enemies who bore him a grudge. They were Pathans. They broke into his granary which could not be protected and took away by loot hundreds of maunds of grain and other things. At last *Pax Britannica* was again restored, and the delinquents were severely dealt with. Several were sentenced to the extreme penalty of law and hanged. Hundreds were convicted to various terms of long imprisonment. The robber Pathans were filled with consternation and knew full well that any complaint by Shri Panditji would earn them their deserts. They, therefore, flew in hot haste to him, threw themselves at his feet and prayed for mercy. Though what they restored from their loot was quite inadequate, yet Panditji would not strike the fallen and so forgave them. "Never does the human soul appear so strong as when it forgives revenge and dares to forgive an injury." *E. H. Chapin.*

Various other traits of higher life in him.—Besides what has been recorded, Shriyut Pandit Rameshwar had several other noble traits. He was a perfect vegetarian as he came from *Vaishnava* family. This family had utmost repulsion against killing animals for food or sacrifice, so much so that when once a young man of the family, son of Bhagwan Dev Atma's uncle, developed insanity and his father was

advised by a Mussalman Fakir who treated him, to make a sacrifice of a goat, as that would help in restoring him to normal sanity, the father indignantly refused to listen to the cruel suggestion and said :—" My son may live or he may die, but I do not want to save his life by this cruel sacrifice." It should be noted that under the treatment of some other physician the youngman was cured of the fell malady.

Shri Panditji was also free from the use of all intoxicants such as wine, tobacco, *Ganja*, *Charas* and opium.

He was fond of domestic animals. He kept cows and buffaloes and took special interest in them. He also kept a horse or a mare and was known to be a very good rider. He possessed very devotional temperament. He kept *Thakurs* and idols of several gods in his house and engaged himself in their worship every day. He also used to repeat *Gurumantra* daily. He used to wear a rosary of *Tulsi*, a sacred plant. He observed religious fasts. During his bath he invariably sang hymns in praise of the Ganges, etc. Shri Krishna was his god of worship. On certain religious occasions he gave a lot of flour and sweet things to Brahmans in charity.

He left this world at the age of 56.

MOTHER.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's blessed mother was born in or about 1821 A. D. of a good and respectable Brahman family, which lived in a village called Musapur near Doulatpur. She was physically a strong dignified and a handsome lady. She was deeply devotional and of highly religious temperament. She was very fond of bodily cleanliness or purity. Besides taking her daily baths, she washed her whole body with cold water every time that she went to stool, whether it was day or night. She was given to observing various fasts. She used to observe a complete fast for full twenty-four hours on the 3rd day of the Hindu month of Bhadra for the longevity and good of her husband. On this day, she would not let even a drop of water enter her parched throat. Again in order to fulfil the wishes of her mother-in-law, she worshipped a goddess and fasted for 8 days during the months of *Chetra* and *Aswin*.

She was a woman of inflexible determination. Once her mind was made up regarding any religious exercise she would follow it at any dear cost. Once in her old age —when she was nearly 64 years of age —she was attacked with a virulent type of diarrhoea and had frequent motions. True to her accepted belief, even in such a delicate health, she took bath after every motion. That disease proved her last. This was her plan all throughout her long life, summer or winter, day or night. Hence in her travels she touched neither food nor water, as she could not do so without taking her bath. Bhagwan Dev Atma says about her :—

" My mother possessed an overwhelming yearning to accept a Guru. Hence one day when I was merely a child and my father had gone out for some days, an old and good-natured Sadhu in charge

of our family temple came over to Akbarpur. My mother felt it a suitable occasion to satisfy her cherished desire. She expressed her longing to the Sadhu. When the latter agreed to initiate her, she asked me to purchase the necessary material required for the occasion. I did so and she was regularly initiated as a disciple and accepted *Guru Mantra*. From that day onward she invariably performed the religious exercise of repeating *Guru Mantra*."

"Whenever I went to Akbarpur, she used to give me hearty and loving greetings. Sometimes she would shed tears of affection. She would herself cook good dishes for me. She had as a rule little attraction for the society of other women of the family. She generally kept aloof. When I married she lived with my wife and, so long as they lived together, she was always satisfied with her. When my younger brother married she began to live with him. But she did not feel herself at home with his wife. Hence in the year 1884, when on my return from Calcutta, I dropped at Akbarpur, she asked me to take her to Lahore, as she desired to live with me. I complied with her wishes and brought her to Lahore. She remained with me for several months. But since she observed great restrictions in the matter of food, she used to cook for all of us with her own hands. When she came to Lahore, it was winter. During the long journey, she neither took food, nor even a drop of water. But when she returned to Akbarpur, it was summer. I requested her, to take water during her long return journey. But she would not think of it. She took neither a grain of food, nor a drop of water for full two nights and one whole day that she was in the train. On the third day she reached her home. She took bath and thereafter sipped some water."

"My mother never put any obstacle in the evolution of my higher life. She never picked up any quarrel with me for my renouncing various prevalent bad customs or ceremonies or false religious faiths from time to time, and never troubled me in the least in this respect."

This pious, remarkable lady of unconquerable will, whose name shall go down in the history of the world with the deepest and most blessed associations of having given to the world, the One True Teacher of Science-Grounded Religion—the most worshipful Founder of the Unique Society of Dev Samaj, the true *Satya Dev* or the highest worshipful Being, Bhagwan Dev Atma—departed from this earth on the 4th November 1885, at the age of nearly 64 years, full of blessings for having done to the world the noblest service which any mother could do.

IV

BIRTH AND UNIQUE HEREDITY.

The blessed couple, the parents of Bhagwan Dev Atma, joined in wedlock when Shriyut Pandit Rameshwar Agnihotri—Bhagwan Dev Atma's blessed father—was about 18 years of age. The first fruit of their blessed wedlock was a baby girl, who was born 3 or 4 years after their marriage. She, however, died at the age of 5 or 6 years. For full ten years, they had no other issue. It is considered by the orthodox *Hindu* parents to be a religious duty to leave behind an issue specially a male one. Many of religious-minded persons have recourse to prescribed religious exercises in order to achieve this end.

Shri Pandit Rameshwar Agnihotri and his devoutly religious consort, had naturally to turn to religious observances when, for a full decade, they had no issue. Accordingly, they observed fasts and penances, read sacred literature and practised charities in various forms. Needy men and the animals of the land, water and air were fed. Austerities of different kinds were gone through. It was in this pious mood and deeply religious frame of mind that the most sacred lady became an expectant mother.

It was the hour of dawn on Friday the 20th of December 1850. The full Moon after a whole night's vigil was about to retire from the field at the advent of her grand-parent, illuminator and life and light giver, the Grand Luminary, whom we call the Sun. It seemed as if both the retiring Moon and the rising Sun were watching the course of events and as if the Sun began to beam with a divine smile when he noticed the travails of the most blessed mother and the most auspicious birth of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and addressed his grand-child the Moon as under:—

Child of my own child! as you retire and I step in, so will all the moons on the horizon of the spiritual world retire, letting this Spiritual Sun just born in the person of this blessed baby to gradually rise and shed its glory. As I am rising so is rising with me this long expected grand Spiritual Luminary—the blessed one who would bring unique light to dispel the inky clouds, gathered on the horizon of the spiritual world by fiction-loving nature of man; who would usher an era of new hope, true faith, highest good and real joy for mankind; who would base religion—the highest boon of man—on the eternal facts and laws of true and everlasting Nature; who would be the true saviour of man from his soul-searing low hates and degenerating low-loves; who would be the maker of new humanity by evolving in them higher consciousnesses. Remember! it is not that the travails of the blessed mother are over, in fact, it is the travails of mother Earth that are over. She—the mother of Bhagwan Dev Atma—will be honoured more and blessed more than any woman in the past, present and the future.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was not the only child of his parents. His blessed parents got a number of children afterwards, but none of them survived except one. He was a male issue. His name was Pandit Ramnarain Agnihotri. He was ten years junior to Bhagwan Dev Atma. He died in the year 1905.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was no doubt born in accordance with the same natural laws as rule the physical birth of every human child on this earth. But as a mango-seed brings with itself a singular potentiality, a singular type of life power in it, and with time and favourable environments develops distinctive form of a tree and yields distinctive fruit which demarcates it from the shrubs like *Dhatura* etc., in the same way Bhagwan Dev Atma was born with the heredity of unique psychic powers which gave him from the very birth a distinct and distinguishable personality.

Bhagwan Dev Atma developed his body like all other human children. But with the advance of years the unfoldment of his inner or soul powers began to distinguish him from all others in his thoughts, in his feelings, in his conduct and in his various dealings and activities. While love of happiness and hatred of pain were and are the main springs of life of the entire mankind, the Dev Atma was from his very childhood free from the control of these universal springs of life of mankind. His distinct springs of conduct even when he was of tender age, were *love for goodness* and *repulsion for evil*. As happiness and goodness are not synonymous—and if they had been identical, there would have been no evil—the courses of his life and those of the life of mankind were not the same. They were different and often times conflicting, hence from his very childhood his uncommon life was the life of unique struggles and unique sufferings. His unique soul powers made it impossible for him in any way to go against them. Hence he could not, even as a child, compromise with anything which was opposed to goodness though such an attitude was calculated to bring him in conflict with others and thus invite pain and misery to visit his innocent and good-loving childhood. This singular and unique psychic endowment of the most blessed kind made him feel, even when he was a child, lonely in this vast multitude of mankind. He has graciously written about himself in his autobiography Volume II on pages 26 and 27, thus :—

Keeping my higher forces of heart foremost and intact, I was deeply desirous of establishing a harmonious and peaceful relation with all my kith and kin and other fellow human beings. But as they were not only void of higher forces but possessed on the contrary low and hence opposite psychic forces, as they were unable to harmonize with me on the basis of my these forces of love of goodness, in the same way I too was incapable of establishing ties of harmonious relationship with them on the basis of their low loves. The conflict which began at that time on account of these contradictory psychic forces and according to nature's inevitable course, not only persisted but grew

and widened as years advanced, and at times it assumed such a horrible form as is beyond all description."

The history of the evolution of these hereditary unique psychic forces or *Dev Shakties* is truly a marvellous study, both romantic and true, full of wonderfully dramatic episodes, affording us glimpses of fascinating beauty and bewildering grandeur, opening before us chapter after chapter of the glorious possibilities of unique higher life and blessedness which they (*i.e. Dev Shakties*) laid open before mankind ; and revealing to us the new, the most blissful and the most righteous kingdom which they are out to bring even on this material world for the highest, the greatest and the most needed good of the entire human race.

PART II
CHILDHOOD

CHILDHOOD.

"So far as the ordinary bringing up of the children is concerned," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "there was nothing out of the common relating either to myself or my brothers and sisters. However during my occasional illness my father, in pursuance of my wishes, used to read to me some such religious hymns (or *stotras*) as according to my acquired beliefs I had come to consider efficacious in curing me of it or averting any unexpected misery.

"During those days," continues Bhagwan Dev Atma, "a school was opened in my native place which imparted education in Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Mathematics, History, Geography, etc. At the age of seven I was admitted to it. I had hardly been there for a few days when the historical sepoy Mutiny of 1857 broke out."

This upheaval shook the whole of India to its foundations. Terror and anarchy spread all over. The riotous and *gunda* element considered it a golden opportunity, either to gratify their private grudges or to fill their pockets by loot. All that stood for peace and order practically vanished. The institutions closed down. The trade stood still. The women and children were kept within doors or removed to safe places. Hence Bhagwan Dev Atma's education was suspended for about a year.

The Mutiny subsided. The British Government having again acquired ascendancy, restored peace and order. Trade, commerce and normal life became once more possible. The women and children could again walk the streets without fear. The schools opened. Bhagwan Dev Atma again commenced attending the school.

Being keen of intellect and wonderfully responsive to all that tended to evolve his intellect, Bhagwan Dev Atma threw himself heart and soul into this new phase of life. He was *ever* punctual. He always went to school well prepared with his lessons. He cherished deep reverence for teachers. He very quickly assimilated what they taught him. Both by his exemplary behaviour and studious habits he attracted attention. He was almost always at the top of his class. Unhindered and unimpeded by any further adverse event or events, he easily but successfully completed the whole course of education available in his own town at the early age of 15.

It was during his school days when he was hardly 12 years of age that his fond parents, according to the custom of the times, performed his sacred-thread ceremony and celebrated his marriage. Since he was their first surviving child and the one who was associated with long and anxious expectations, devout yearnings and a deal of religious austerities, so all things, associated with him stirred them very deeply. Hence, they spent freely on the above two ceremonies.

It was a curious and most happy coincidence that the girl to whom Bhagwan Dev Atma was married, was by her heredity possessed of those wonderful psychic powers, which enabled her to march hand in hand with her illustrious husband in his uncommon and uphill path of the evolution of true higher life, and welcomed all kinds of sacrifices for it. It was this glorious lady who besides leading her sex in the upward path of life subsequently became the mother of late Shriman Pandit Har Narayan Agnihotri, the eldest son of Bhagwan, the great orator of Dev Samaj and a philosopher disciple of his unique father, who spent nearly the whole of his life on this earth in the service of the unique cause of his unique father.

After completing the whole education available in his native place, Bhagwan Dev Atma began to work in the Munsiff's Court. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“ When I left school, I joined the Munsiff's Court which was located in our own building, but I felt unhappy there. I had developed an immense love for education. I was anxious to study further. But Akbarpur provided no further scope for me.”

Every higher psychic force assumed a dynamic potency in Bhagwan's soul and it would not let any barriers stand in the way of its full and free satisfaction. Such was the case with his love for knowledge also. Its non-satisfaction was a positive pain to him and made life intolerable for him. Hence his whole soul rose against any fullstop to his education. However, this force did not stand alone in his unique soul constitution. The entire world of motives of Bhagwan's glorious child-soul was something quite uncommon and they lent lustre to, and gave a wholesome and most fruitful turn to this love for knowledge also. What that world of motives of Bhagwan's soul was, even when he was a mere child, will be the burden of subsequent chapters of this part of the book.

I

UNIQUE PSYCHIC TRAITS.

[Upto the age of 16.]

Bhagwan Dev Atma was born in this world subject to the same natural laws which rule the birth of every other human child. But by virtue of the character of his unique soul-powers—the germs whereof he had received as a rich heritage from his distinguished ancestors—he was quite a distinct and remarkable entity. It is true that as a child he grew and developed like all other human children, so far as his bodily organism, physical activities and education were concerned. But a world of difference began to manifest itself between him and the world around, when with the advance of years, his hereditary soul powers began to evolve in suitable environments.

1. THE GREAT REMARKATING LINE—LOVE OF GOODNESS HIS PRIME MOTIVE.

In the world of thought and of action, the mankind, individually and collectively, has not risen above the love of happiness as a fundamental spring of its life (here or hereafter.) The man—from the savage to the savant, sinner to the saint, peasant to the prince, fool to the philosopher, etc., etc.,—has felt attraction, from his infancy, for all that he has realized to be conducive to his pleasure, and has felt varying degrees of repulsion for all that is felt painful by him. This is the normal behaviour and is also regarded to be the ideal behaviour for man in general. Even in the highest reach of the so-called Himalayan heights of his philosophic speculation, man, handicapped by love for happiness, has proclaimed and taught *anand* or felicity—sensual or mental, in this world or beyond—to be the summum bonum or the supreme ideal of life. All the so-called world religions are nothing but devices—in majority of cases too easy, too cheap and too absurd—made and planned to secure, to the highest degree this ardently longed-after *anand* or bliss. As the *love of happiness* is not synonymous with the *love of good*, the inevitable result that followed from this defective psychic make-up of man and his equally defective philosophies was, that *good* was sacrificed if it failed to afford *pleasure* or caused any bodily or mental *pain* in its pursuit. On the other hand positive evil was greedily swallowed, provided it were baited with joys through the satisfaction of any of the low loves or low hates or provided it removed any pain resulting from the want of their gratification. This is the reason why there is no sin—from that of cruelty to animals, to looting and cold-blooded murder of man—which is not approved of by one or other system of the so-called religions prevalent on this planet.

But as opposed to all this, Bhagwan Dev Atma, even as a child, evinced an altogether new spring of his general behaviour. By virtue of his unique hereditary powers, even as a child, he felt mighty attraction for all that was *good*, and deep and full repulsion for all that was antagonistic to *good*, so far as he knew it to be such. And even as a child, he did not mind any physical, monetary, or social risk, harm or loss which he had had to suffer in pursuit of what he felt to be *good*.

Hence as we can easily distinguish a human child even from the various species of apes, by distinctive acts of his general behaviour, performed by him in the growing light of his progressive intellect, and we can safely call one, a man, and another an animal, without meaning any insult to the latter; in the same way we can, in the light of Bhagwan Dev Atma, distinctly mark various acts of general behaviour of this unique child, done by him in the growing light of his progressive highest soul-powers, as bearing a different stamp and as emanating from a different world of motives from the similar acts of the rest of mankind. In fact the standard of conduct which Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique soul powers placed before him was the standard of *good* as opposed to *evil* and *not* that of *pleasure* as opposed to *pain*. Since happiness as an ideal, and good as an ideal are more often than not antagonistic, and in several cases array themselves in hostile camps, the absolute pursuit of one involves, in various ways, the suppression, and abjuration of the other. This is the reason why Bhagwan Dev Atma even as a child had to eschew *pleasure* and pass through fire and water—through pain, misery, struggle, heartache, &c. in order to stand by the good. Writes Bhagwan Dev Atma in his autobiography in Hindi (Part II) :—

“The first psychic force which evolved in me during my childhood, was an extraordinary and wonderful love for good, and this mighty motive force made it imperative for me to side with all that I felt to be *good* in my own relation and in the relation of others, and refuse to side with all that I believed and felt to be wrong in relation to myself and others.”

Some illustrations in this respect from Bhagwan's early life are given below :—

(1) According to the old Hindu custom in the well to do families, even boys were required to put on ornaments. Bhagwan Dev Atma too, was adorned with several precious ornaments, when at the age of twelve, he was taken for his marriage ceremony. At that time Bhagwan did not know that that custom was wrong and even dangerous. But soon after his marriage he read in a book that the wearing of ornaments by boys was not only a wrong custom, but it was fraught with danger to the very life of the child wearer as it tempted callous thieves to way-lay children, rob them of the ornaments and not unoften put an end to their lives. To know anything to be a wrong and an evil, and to give it up wholly and absolutely, was one and the same thing with this unique child. He at once put

off the ornaments, though his loving parents strongly wished him to wear them. His attitude against what he felt to be a wrong, was so full and uncompromising, that he declined absolutely to put on these ornaments even on such an important occasion as "*Gauna*" (the ceremony to bring the bride home from her parents' house), when his family custom demanded it, and his loving parents whom he otherwise deeply revered and honoured, strongly insisted on him to do so. No consideration of any kind would weigh with Bhagwan Dev Atma even as a child to go against what he believed to be *good*.

(2) As a student in his school, Bhagwan Dev Atma was always punctual and regular in attendance. As a rule he topped the class, but whereas he loved to study, he also liked to play. He felt that sports after work were essential for him. But his revered father did not approve of *this*. He even rebuked him for doing so. Once he read in a book that playing games was essential for the health of boys, and parents should never stand in the way of their children exercising their body by games. Bhagwan immediately took that book to his revered father and requested him to read the portion concerned. It is not known what reply Bhagwan's father returned after reading the portion of the book. But this settled Bhagwan in the beneficial course of his conduct.

(3) During his early childhood, the love of education evolved in Bhagwan Dev Atma and grew mighty and imperious. Once Bhagwan made an unsuccessful attempt to run away from home for further education. *Bhagwan regarded ignorance to be a curse and knowledge to be a blessing*. Hence whereas all the boys in his native place were quite content with the education that their native school provided, Bhagwan felt unhappy. His soul fluttered as in a cage. It tried to break the barriers. Hence when a way was opened for him to receive higher education at Roorkee—a place where none before him had ever gone for similar object from the soil of his birth—he determined to go. His parents, out of their abnormal fondness for him, tried to stand in his way. His fond mother specially showed her unwillingness to let him go out of her sight for any length of time and that again to a town situated at a great distance from home. But Bhagwan felt himself helpless in the matter, and hence could not submit to the demon of ignorance. He told his parents in the plainest possible terms, that he would go and if they withheld their approval and consent, he would seek an opportunity and run away from home to Roorkee. Bhagwan was so wonderfully constituted that he never could mean or show any disrespect to his parents whom he honoured deeply and whom he loved and served whole heartedly. But he could not by the very make-up of his soul go against what he believed to be *good* and could not side with what he believed to be wrong and harmful.

(4) Bhagwan was a mere child receiving education in his native school, when he saw in the sublime light of his unique soul that, if education was good for boys, it was equally good for girls. This light was nothing but a command laid on him by his own unique soul to

follow. Hence he persuaded two lady relatives of his to begin education and commenced teaching them—one a niece and the other a cousin's wife—though education among women was viewed in those days with positive abhorrence and considered extremely pernicious and inauspicious. This step was taken by Bhagwan Dev Atma in the year 1862 or 1863—those dark and dismal days when there was a general apathy and opposition to the education even of boys—but he cared not for the opposition that he had to face and continued to educate these ladies.

These incidents were a specimen and a fair forecast of the new psychology that was to develop in this wonderful soul and which was to give a new type of life to the world to worship and follow.

2. SENSE OF DUTY.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

"Along with the evolution in me of the love for *good*, it was but inevitable that strong sense of duty should blossom in my soul. For whenever I felt that I was bound to carry out my right pledges, and to abide by all right engagements in relation to others, and when I saw in my light that total or partial non-fulfilment on my part of such pledges and engagements would result in evil, my own innate love for goodness and my own innate hatred for evil made it absolutely imperative for me to fulfil them ; and made it impossible for me to act otherwise. *Nay it was impossible for me even to think contrary to it.* This is why I had to stand true to my pledges and engagements at great sacrifice, and even when, in order to accomplish them, I had to pass through great pain and suffering. This is why from my very childhood the sense of duty grew and flourished in my soul.

"Because of this sense of duty, I felt it imperative on me to work well and finish before time any piece of business which I felt right and proper to undertake in my own relation or in the relation of others. It was this sense of duty which compelled me always to go to school in time."

This trait grew into a most glorious and mighty force in Bhagwan's later-life. Besides manifesting itself in various forms, this wonderful force made Bhagwan absolutely true in all his engagements. In thousands of instances which took place in his life, he always showed such an absolute fidelity to his time engagements, both in his private as well as in his public life, that he was punctual to the very minute. This can rarely be said of any political, religious or social leader of any importance in our land, where sense of punctuality is flouted and time engagements mercilessly trampled under foot.

We however record here, from his early life, an instance of Bhagwan's sense of duty to domesticated birds, which would not fail to interest our readers.

Bhagwan was hardly 12 years of age when he developed marvellous fondness for the young ones of some animals and beautiful birds and he loved to rear them. In those days besides rearing some other beautiful birds, he had domesticated some pigeons. Bhagwan's

revered father, owing to some superstitious belief, did not like his son to keep pigeons, which he considered inauspicious. But Bhagwan loved to keep and serve them. He, therefore, kept a lot of pigeons in a room on the upper storey of the house, which room, as a rule, was unoccupied. It was during those days that Bhagwan's marriage was to be celebrated and he had therefore to go out of Akbarpur. He was to remain absent from home for about 7 or 8 days. The self-imposed duty of feeding and safeguarding these pigeons taxed his brain to make some arrangement.

These thoughts possessed his soul so completely that while the band was playing at the door of his house, and festivities were being held in various other ways for the happy occasion, he was anything but happy. He set to find out suitable means of providing both food and safety for those innocent inarticulate creatures. An idea at last flashed on his mind. He took immediate steps to put it into practice. He went upto them. He placed some seers of grain and a big pot full of water which he believed would suffice for them for the period of his absence. He then locked the room from outside, so as to bar every passage for any cat or any other dangerous animal, and then started with the marriage procession perfectly at ease. On his return from marriage, the first thing that he did, was to go up, unlock the room and find for himself how his little friends had fared during his absence. Intense was his joy and great was his relief when he found them hale and hearty.

Behind every man's thoughts and actions there are motives or feelings. Absence of a feeling means absence of thought and action in that respect. There are millions of children who would feel happy to see beautiful pigeons or other birds. But it is quite another thing to feel anxiety, due to a sense of responsibility and to strain every nerve to satisfy their needs. This is demonstrative of a marked feeling of the sense of duty, which is a rare sight in a boy of just 12 years of age.

3. GRATITUDE.

"Owing to the evolution of love of Goodness in me," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "it was but natural that I should see and realize the beauty of any good turn done to me by others, and not only feel indebted and grateful to every such benefactor, but try to make due return for the favours done to me, by serving all such benefactors in all such ways, and to such an extent, as lay in my power, and thus satisfy this higher feeling of gratitude. This was the reason why I gladly undertook every such form of service of my parents as they liked and joyfully took part in domestic duties. This feeling led me to go to the house of the Head Master of my school and render several acts of service in his relation. Besides attending to several duties in connection with my house or parents I used also to shampoo the feet of my father."

4. HELPING OTHERS.

From his very childhood, Bhagwan developed a strong love for reading all such books as dealt with religious topics, and

which came to his hands. He did not read them simply to satisfy his personal feeling, but he invariably read them or related their purport to others for their good also. Whatever he felt and believed good for himself, he felt and believed to be good for others too, and hence tried to share those blessings with them. "Once," says Bhagwan, "my father took me, on the occasion of a fair at Bethoor, on the banks of the Ganges for a holy bath. I bought a Hindi book there which contained besides another story, the story of *Bharat Milap* (reunion of Shri Ram Chandra with Bharat) in verse. I used to read these poems with great zest and with an amount of enthusiasm. When I read the lamentations of Bharat, I was so deeply and perceptibly moved that I burst into tears and continued weeping for some time. I used to read this story in verse to others in the house of a neighbouring Brahman. Several persons used to congregate there to hear me read that *Katha*. When I finished the reading for the day, I invariably rang a metal dish in imitation of ringing a bell. In order to satisfy my feeling for doing good to them, I propagated to others whatever I felt beneficial for my own self."

This glorious force of helping others with whatever blessings he had gained for himself, was the main spring of the unique step he took at his tender age, for imparting education to two ladies of his house in the year 1862 or thereabout, when education of women was an anathema, and when even the education of boys was not looked upon with favour. Bhagwan continued teaching them for a pretty long time. This unique child therefore gave early signs of growing into the future unique benefactor of humanity.

4. ATTRACTION FOR HIGHER OR ALTRUISTIC VIRTUES OF OTHER.

Owing to the presence of higher feelings in Bhagwan (all due to his love for Goodness) he was forcefully attracted from his very childhood, towards noble traits in life of others and such virtues appealed to him infinitely more than any lower or non-altruistic traits of life. Bhagwan's parents followed *Vaishnava* creed. They believed Rama and Krishna as incarnations of the supposed deity, Vishnu or God. This traditional belief Bhagwan inherited from his parents. His father used to narrate to him anecdotes of Rama's life—how Rama always proved a protector and unfailing refuge for those devoted to him, and how he stood by them in the hour of need and granted their wishes. Bhagwan accepted all that his revered father related about Rama and his devotee Hanuman, with unquestioning faith. These traits, which he was taught to believe were possessed by Rama, exercised strange fascination on his heart. Due to the presence of these noble traits in his soul in a well-developed form he felt reverence and love both for such virtues and their possessors. He liked to sing their glories. Hence he committed to memory several hymns or *stotras* in praise of Rama and his devotee, Hanuman. As he believed Hanuman to be an invisible supporter and protector of all his devoted followers, Bhagwan felt immense devotional zeal for him and never left

his house for school or any other place without offering obeisance to the idol of Hanuman and soliciting his protection and support. Before retiring to bed at night, he sang a *mantra* embodying a prayer to Hanuman, to guard his life during the whole night when he was sound *asleep*. Even when he fell ill, he requested his revered father to read those portions of scriptures or such *stotras* as he thought were necessary for the removal of illness. The mere recitation of all these used to have soothing influence on the heart of Bhagwan.

Bhagwan observed a fast every Tuesday in honour of Hanuman. Bhagwan repeated *mantra* of Hanuman, one hundred times by dropping one grain seed after each repetition (one of 100 grain seeds); used to prepare food (sweet cakes) with his own hands and took it with curd only once that day. He laid an offering of *Patashas* (a kind of sweet) before the idol of Hanuman and then distributed those among others as *parshad* or holy gift. Since he cherished a belief that Hanuman felt gratified if any body recited *katha* (or story) of Rama, Bhagwan used to sit on the platform in front of his teacher's house and sing some verses from the poetic version of Rama's life by the renowned Indian poet, Tulsidas.

In all this behaviour of Bhagwan, the point worth noticing is the glorious fact that even as a child Bhagwan could see, appreciate and love noble or higher life and felt overmastering attraction, deep reverence and even devotion for those who according to his belief possessed such virtues whether they were in flesh and blood on this earth or were supposed to be in the next world or heaven.

This fascination of Bhagwan's heart for the noble traits of life in others was not confined only to his revered or worshipful beings, but extended even to those who possessed similar attraction and feeling of devotion for those beings. Thus Bhagwan revered even those who revered his objects of adoration and worship.

"Once it so happened," writes Bhagwan, "that my father took me to Bethoor situated on the banks of the Ganges for the holy bath on the occasion of full moon day of *Kartik Shudi*. This place is believed to be the *ashram* of the great Rishi Balmiki and is situated at a distance of 7 or 8 miles from Cawnpore. A very great fair is held there on that occasion. I witnessed there a young *Sadhu*, quite clean shaven, wearing an ochre coloured dress with *sitar* (a stringed instrument), in hand, and small round bells tied about his ankes, singing a religious song. Two other men played on *tabla* and harmonium, &c. In the ecstasy of his devotion the *Sadhu* was also dancing. My father took me to the place, and we stood there enjoying his devotional song. The very sight of that *Sadhu* in his deep devotional mood exercised sublime influence on my heart. The entire scene made such a deep impression on me that upto today I remember the first couplet of the song."

"There were other sights and scenes there. But they did not impress me, nay some of them failed even to attract my attention.

But this sight stirred me so deeply and fully that even while writing these lines, I feel a revival of the sublime sense of devotion and happiness which I felt then."

6. INVIOULATE REGARD FOR SACRED VOWS.

Bhagwan had a masterful feeling for all that purported to conduce to the welfare of his soul. Hence he did not confine himself to observing fast only in honour of Hanuman, but he kept a fast also on the Birthday occasion of Sri Krishna which fell on *Bhadra vadi ashtami*. The fast meant for him strict observance of all the injunctions laid down in relation to it. Hence as required by this *Brat* or fast, Bhagwan not only took no food at all, from the break of dawn upto the mid hour of night, but would not allow a single drop of water to pass down his throat, even though pangs of thirst proved a torment for him. He was merely a child then. But he was determined to be true to the vow, he had voluntarily undertaken. His parents were opposed to his observing such a difficult fast at that tender age. But he used to tell them respectfully that if all that could conduce to their spiritual welfare, it was bound to help his soul too and he would not let such an occasion, slip for a little physical discomfort. "I remember but too well," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "that once the thirst grew so oppressive and my throat became so parched that my father grew apprehensive and asked me to wet my mouth by gargling with water. I obeyed him to that extent as it involved no breach of my vow. I remember that when I took some water in my mouth just only to moisten it, my whole soul rose against even the possibility of a single drop trickling down my throat. I took extreme care that my sacred vow should not be violated and I may not be deprived of the benefit to my soul which I believed to be its blessing."

7. DOING EVERY THING TO A FINISH.

"Along with the evolution in me of the love for goodness," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "it was but necessary and as a matter of course, that the feeling of doing every thing to a finish, should grow in me. This was because it was intolerable for me to lose the greater amount of good accruing from doing a good thing to a finish than by leaving it half done or unfinished. I was, therefore, extremely anxious to see this higher feeling of mine to triumph by doing to a finish every good work that I began, and never leaving it half done or unfinished as far as it was possible for me, even though I had had to encounter any amount of difficulties or hardships in so doing. To leave anything half done or to fail in completing it, was, on the contrary, absolutely unbearable for me."

This noble trait of very high character manifested itself in Bhagwan Dev Atma before the early age of sixteen. Hence he was regarded even at that tender age to be a trustworthy child by his parents, teachers and others. This trait is rare not only in adults all over the world but even in not a few of the so-called brilliant lights among the leaders of racial, national or humanitarian work.

This trait, as we shall see in subsequent parts of Bhagwan's unique life, grew and manifested itself in such glorious light in his public life that those around him had to acknowledge the rare sublimity and singular refulgence of this golden trait which made Bhagwan's life absolutely trustworthy in all relations.

The beauty of this wonderful trait is not clear to our people or they would have simply adored Bhagwan Dev Atma only for this one trait. But it was one among the many glorious forces of higher life which blossomed in his unique soul. Those who realize what the absence of this trait has cost mankind thus lament its loss and express their intensity of feeling :—

“Everywhere over this broad earth, we see the tragic result of botched work; wooden legs, armless sleeves, numberless graves, fatherless, motherless homes everywhere speak of somebody's carelessness, somebody's blunders, some body's habits of inaccuracy.

“If every body put his conscience into his work, did it to a complete finish, it would not only reduce the loss of human life, the mangling and maiming of men and women, to a fraction of what it is at present, but it would also give us a high quality of manhood and womanhood.” (Dr. Marden : “Do it to a finish.”)

True! And Bhagwan Dev Atma ultimately made it his supreme ideal of life to liberate mankind from all destructive psychic forces and evolve among other various forces of higher character, this inestimable force also.

8. ESTABLISHING GOOD-PRODUCING HARMONY.

The fundamental and masterful force which possessed the soul of Bhagwan and determined all his thoughts and activities and provided a unique world of motives, was the most glorious love of Goodness. This highest psychic force, on the one hand made it imperative on him to accept and follow, in every day life, whatever course he saw in his own light or considered according to his beliefs to be productive of good to his own soul or to the interests of others; and, on the other, made it impossible for him to compromise with any wrong or evil or whatever tended to prove antagonistic to Good. Such a life brought him even, at that tender age, into violent conflict with those possessed of happiness-based and happiness-motivated low loves and low hates and made his life an endless struggle. But amidst all this conflict and struggle he longed to establish higher harmony with other existences and considered disharmony as an unavoidable and unpleasant fact. He, however, yearned for harmony on his own terms *i.e.*, with higher and altruistic forces intact and as indispensable and irreducible minimum for harmonious relations.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“All good-producing higher forces which had sprouted in my soul in my childhood demanded their satisfaction. When any of them

was obstructed in its natural gratification or was adversely opposed, I felt deep shock and pain, and my peace of mind was greatly disturbed. Very naturally I wished to save myself from all such mental shocks. But I would not and could not establish any harmonies with any body either by smothering any of my such higher forces of higher life or set them at naught. Hence from my very childhood, my life became a life of great struggle. I was myself unaware of the philosophy of this struggle of life. But the higher feelings of my higher life which ruled me kept me busily active in this life of intensive struggle."

"I was attracted to Hanuman because I had acquired a belief from my elders that he was the most devoted and trustworthy disciple or *Bhakta* of Rama. This noble trait was very dear to me. But when my intellectual powers were sufficiently awakened to enable me to understand that Hanuman was not omnipresent and he could not consequently listen or accede to my prayer every time and at every place; and when I came to believe that the God whose incarnation Hanuman worshipped, was alone omniscient and omnipresent and the supreme well-wisher and doer of Good, I was powerfully drawn to His worship and became His devotee. In those days I imbibed Vedantic philosophy from my *Guru* and Gita, and believed that Krishna was the incarnation of God and all Universe the manifestation of Brahm. But when I came to Lahore, I got free from these beliefs in incarnations of the God and Vedantism, and believed and worshipped God to be not only Omniscient and Omnigood but as an immaterial entity. Again, where, with the growth of the Love of Truth and the highest psychic light called *Dev Joti*, I came to realize the untenableness of belief, in the existence of any being called God, I gave up this false belief exactly as I had given up other false beliefs of my childhood. Then again in my growing highest psychic light, I saw Universe or Nature to be one Reality, which was, is, and shall always remain a Reality, and came to entertain absolute faith in it. When I saw the grand work of its most beautiful and higher evolutionary forces which, on the one hand are making all such non-living or living beings, as are capable of evolution (in our own solar system, besides others,) higher and better and are enabling such evolved objects or existences to gradually establish more and more harmonious relations with one another, and on the other hand are ever blotting out of existence all such objects and beings as possess no capacity for growing better or higher; and again when I saw that these evolutionary forces are helping all such objects and existences, which possess the requisite capacity of growing to a state of complete good-producing harmony, and to evolve to that unique state and to form complete harmonious relations with others, I developed the highest love for such a unique process in Nature, since I found in it the full satisfaction of my all-sided Love for Truth and Goodness. I began to love with greater keenness than I ever did before, such objects and existences as, according to my knowledge, had grown higher and more beautiful and also in proportion to the extent any of them had evolved

in the course of such higher evolution. Thus all my false beliefs having vanished for ever, the path for the progressive evolution of my highest soul life was opened up for me clearly and completely for ever."

Thus we see that the powerful feeling which made Bhagwan to establish higher harmony in various relations on the basis of higher forces even in his childhood, took him ultimately, though gradually but surely, to the beloved goal of his supreme mission, by enabling him to break down all the barriers of false and fictitious beliefs and to continue his onward march to the above mentioned supreme goal.

The story of such a wonderful development would form the most interesting, romantic and fascinating chapters in the subsequent parts of this short biography.

II

OTHER HIGHER FEELINGS.

[Up to the age of 16.]

In the last chapter, we have described one set of higher forces that evolved in Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique soul during his childhood. We shall describe in this chapter still another set of the various noble feelings which made their appearance in him at this tender age.

1. TRUE RESPECT AND REVERENCE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma developed, even in his childhood, a true feeling of respect and reverence for his parents, elders of his family and community, for teachers and other respectable persons. According to his family traditions, he offered salutation to his parents and elders in the family and teachers in school by touching their feet, and all other respected persons by putting his hand on his forehead and bowing down his head before them and uttering the words "*Bandagi*," "*Adab arz*," etc. He displayed true respectful attitude throughout all his behaviour towards them whether in standing in their presence, in sitting by them, or in conversing with them. He maintained the same respectful attitude in their absence as he did in their presence. Hence if he disagreed with them on any matter, he would not stoop to the meanness of ridiculing them before others and behind their back. He could not even tolerate the society of those who indulged in this most degraded and base behaviour. We often observe many a man ostensibly standing all attention before his elders and expressing a very respectful outward attitude, and thus showing all external bodily signs of respect and regard for them, but turning instantaneously into an ill-mannered boor, when the elders' back was turned, jeering and mocking at them, tearing their respect into thinnest shreds and subjecting their talk, their mannerism, peculiar eccentricities or even imagined defects to a form of sneering mimicry calculated to excite outbursts of laughter in others. This gives morbid or diseased satisfaction to their inflated ego or such other evil trait.

But Bhagwan Dev Atma behaved in their absence, as well as he behaved in their presence, with uniformly respectful attitude. He neither inherited nor acquired any such evil or wrong feeling which characterises the behaviour of general man, with whom respect amounts to hollow outward show only of some outward form but with whom the honour of none is safe. Bhagwan's whole soul revolted at all that.

Hence his feeling of respect or reverence, to whatever extent he cherished it for any body, was all pure and unalloyed. This true and noble feeling in relation to elders, teachers, parents and others, grew in him with age and became nobler and fuller.

2. COMPASSION.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“None of my parents, grand parents both on father's and mother's sides and none in the stock, took flesh or joined or took part in hunting birds and animals in order to make sport of them. Hence neither did I inherit any feeling of “*Hinsa*” violence nor did I develop it, but detested all acts of teasing, unduly annoying, beating, kicking or otherwise cruelly treating any creature. Nay, as opposed to this, if I saw any person teasing or otherwise harming any other person or sentient being or even when I saw any person or sentient being suffering from any disease or pain and witnessed the sufferer's expression thereof from his cries or otherwise, I felt deeply shocked and always strongly wished that the victim may soon become free from that suffering.”

His mercy or compassion for animals is illustrated by the following beautiful incident of Bhagwan's child life.

Bhagwan was a mere child of 9 or 10 years. Owing to his strong feelings of love for the young ones of birds and animals, he brought home the young one of a squirrel. He had gone to play in an open place, when he saw two young ones of a mother squirrel playing there. His love for such beautiful tiny creatures led him to capture one and bring it to his house for rearing it. As soon as he reached his house with the little pet and his revered father came to know of the fact, he not only expressed his great displeasure but he said to Bhagwan : “The mother of the young one must be feeling quite sad at this forced separation from its dear one. Go back and restore the young one to its misery-stricken mother.” The appeal made by the revered father about the mother squirrel's affliction and sorrow at the separation from its young one and the piteous sight it brought before his mind, touched the heart of Bhagwan. He felt that his father was completely in the right. Bhagwan at once said, “All right father, I am taking it back to restore it to its unhappy mother.”

It was the hour of dusk. The shadows of night were falling. The place was more than a mile from his house. He had to go all the way alone. This child did not belong to that type who would go some distance, throw the young one at some place to its fate, and then come back home to report that the orders were carried out. Such callousness (in the world) shows an utter absence of any compassion for animal life and the presence of utter selfishness. But unfortunately such indeed is the rule with children in general.

Bhagwan Dev Atma even as a child, was so completely possessed by the tender but mighty feeling of compassion which came into play at the appeal made to his heart by his father, of the sufferings of the mother, inflicted on her by his taking away the young one from her, that it allowed no other feeling to interfere. The darkness could have no terror for him. The prospect of lonely walk to a distant place failed to damp his spirits. The feeling of possessing

the young one to satisfy his own personal fondness for it vanished altogether. The one polestar led him on—the polestar of the tree where the squirrel mother lived. And slowly and steadily he walked the whole distance. He at last reached the destination. He stood under the very tree where he had caught the young one. He placed the young one at the foot of the tree. The young one ran up the tree with a cry of joy. The mother, which was really sitting afflicted with the sorrow at the separation, rushed down with all her might when she heard the cry of her little one. She speedily ran some distance down the tree, greeted her beloved child, metaphorically took it to heart and accompanied it up the tree. Not only was her sorrow of separation gone, but a thrill of joy animated her whole being and she expressed it by continued notes. “This union of the mother and child,” says Bhagwan Dev Atma, “made me extremely happy and my feeling of compassion having been gratified, I felt contented and at peace with myself. In this poised and delightful mood I returned home.”

This feeling grew into such a powerful force that after Bhagwan hoisted the flag of his Dev Dharma and organised his unique society of the Dev Samaj, he laid down as an imperative condition for every man who sought admission in to his society, that not only would he not himself take flesh or hunt any animal or kill it for trade or for any other purpose, but he would not help others in this cruel course of conduct. Of the 16 periods into which the year has been divided by him for doing special *Sadhans* (religious exercises) in order to establish harmony with the various cosmic relations, he has allotted one full period to the realization and examination of our relation with the animal world and for serving them in various ways. Wherever the flag of Bhagwan Dev Atma is hoisted, not only would useful and innocent animals not be slaughtered for food, hunted or butchered for trade, or for satisfaction of any other lower and personal feeling, but they would be treated as friends by humanity to be tended and served.

3. CLEANLINESS.

During his very childhood, Bhagwan developed the sense of personal cleanliness. He hated untidiness and dirty living. He always washed his hands, feet and face. He invariably took a clean bath except when he was ill. He kept a clean bed, his books tidy and in order, and all his personal belongings neat and clean. This trait showed itself most conspicuously when Bhagwan began his unique public career.

Our countrymen whose false standard excludes the sense of cleanliness and order from the life of one dedicated to religion and who, on the contrary, appreciate careless untidiness and thoughtless disorder as savouring of high spiritualism, took ignorant but powerful exception to those wonderful senses in Bhagwan. Though they admitted the force of the saying “Cleanliness is next to Godliness” and repeated the adage like parrots, yet one of them

expressed his disdain by sneering at Bhagwan by saying that he was "as punctual as a clock and as neat as a cat."

What a perversion of mind and what a poor conception of higher life ! It is difficult to expect any attempt in such souls or a race consisting of such souls even to admire, far less to assimilate such virtues and such noble traits. It is difficult for them to realize that the individuals and races are higher in the scale of Evolution not according to expertness in metaphysical squibbles or speculative jugglery but in the possession of higher character forces.

4. PROLONGING THE LIFE AND UTILITY OF THINGS.

Bhagwan during his childhood, developed another rare quality. He not only kept his books neat, clean and unsoiled by ink or any other dirty blots and had all other things well tidied, but it gave him a positive pain if any harm came to them. He never crushed or tore the pages of any of his books and could never bear to see them to be so treated. Unconsciously he had developed a strong feeling of prolonging, as much as he could, the normal life of his books, his utensils, his clothes, his bed and bed covers and various other things which had the good fortune to belong to this unique child.

If this constructive and protective force had caught the attention of any sensible man, he could safely have prophesied that the unique child was bound one day to become the true saviour of humanity. He who could not tolerate any injury even to an inanimate object was bound to feel excruciating pain at the sight of the downfall of humanity into refined wolves and civilized cannibals.

It would have been an easy and natural corollary to foretell that this unique child would be impelled by his unique senses to undergo all kinds of hardships to explore the untrodden but rich and virgin but tangled forests and scale the steep and dangerous cliffs of the spiritual world, and that he would be compelled by his growing *Dev Shakties* to give away everything near and dear to him, even his own precious health, for discovering and building the high road to the growth of higher life among humanity and for their safety and the safety of the sub-human worlds.

In his later life, we ourselves saw how a carpet spread in his dining room looked as new as if it was purchased only a few days back, even after 14 years' constant use. We saw a watch with Bhagwan which too had given service for a very long time. Even clay things worth a few annas if once kept in a room of Bhagwan for decoration had the guarantee of the longest utility. Cots, chairs, tables, etc. not only had a long life but were kept with such an amount of care that they looked new.

What a beautiful sense this ! and what a dead loss its absence entails on the world !

5. ATTRACTION FOR FLOWERS.

This remarkable child felt attraction for flowers even at that

tender age. When on occasions a flower-maid brought flowers rolled up in a leaf for the worship of Bhagwan's family idols and the elders of the family laid them at the family altar, Bhagwan used to feel inspired by the sight. Bhagwan's eldest cousin was employed at Cawnpore. Whenever he came home and brought roses preserved in a wet cloth for the worship of idols and opened them in Bhagwan's presence, Bhagwan's heart used to feel a sense of wonderful felicity on seeing them. When during the rainy season wild lotus flowers blossomed in pools, they along with their long stems were brought to market for sale. Bhagwan used to gladly purchase them. He would make the stem by a special device into a form of necklace with the flower at the lower end. He would then put it on round his neck and thus feel joy. This attraction for flowers which made its appearance in Bhagwan's heart during his childhood, grew into a most glorious love in his later life. We ourselves saw that whether Bhagwan lived in his own house or in any rented house, flowers were his inseparable companions. He invariably kept flower pots and with his own hands tended and served them. In his permanent residential quarters, there was always a small but tastefully kept orchard of flowers and a number of flower pots. He personally looked after the orchard and the pots. His attraction for flowers as a child grew into an intelligent and absorbing, highly discriminative and protective psychic force or love in Bhagwan as a man.

6. ATTRACTION FOR BEAUTIFUL BIRDS, ETC.

"I was very powerfully attracted," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "to beautiful birds of variegated colours such as domesticated pigeons, nightingales, parrots, doves, etc., and the young ones of dogs, cats, etc., so much so that I loved to keep them with me and to domesticate them and look after their various wants." It was this psychic force which led Bhagwan when he was a child to keep a kitten and lovingly bring it up. It was female young kitten and was white like a jasmine flower, so Bhagwan named it "Chambeli" (or Jasmine). He tied a small bell round its neck. He himself fed it with milk. It used to pass happy under such a loving care. Its joy gave added delight to Bhagwan. But this fortunate kitten had a short life. One night when all were asleep, a savage and wild cat found its way in Bhagwan's house and brutally killed the kitten. Its tragic death gave Bhagwan's young heart a painful shock. But he bowed to the inevitable with courage and patience. Once Bhagwan had a parrot which lived a good long life. Besides these, he kept a few other birds as well. He kept a covey of pigeons and looked after their needs. He had brought a squirrel's young one for similar purpose which he had to take back when his feeling of compassion was roused by an appeal, made to his heart by his revered father, of the misery of its mother at its forced separation from her beloved young one.

7. SELF-HELP.

"Being a lover of Goodness," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "it

was intolerable for me to desire for or solicit, without any special reason, the help of any other person, in all such matter, which I myself could attend to ; or let sloth, love of ease or undue fear of trouble stand in the way of my doing such jobs and thus produce any undue harm. As lover of goodness I could not consciously compromise or co-operate with what was wrong. Hence it was that a feeling of self-help flowered forth in my soul during my very childhood."

This is in itself a remarkable force. To the extent that any single person or race possesses this psychic force, does it rise high in the scale of evolution. It was this beautiful but a powerful force of character which prepared Bhagwan even as a child to put his shoulders to any work he considered good, even though the world around him, (being wedded to a false superstitious belief or practice,) either did not do it or did not like to do it or worse than that what they in their perversion of mind considered inconsistent with their so-called self-respect or in reality an exaggerated sense of personal dignity.

In Bhagwan's later life, this force grew and manifested itself in most beautiful colours.

8. SELF-RESPECT.

It is revolting to or absolutely inconsistent with the higher or true sense of self-respect.

(1) to visit a person or stay in his house who neither wishes to see you nor tolerates your presence in his house, specially when you have come to know of such an attitude of his by any means ;

(2) to beg from any one a loan of a thing which you can afford to purchase for yourself or which you can easily provide yourself with ;

(3) to behave in relation to juniors in a way degrading to one's position or tradition ; or

(4) to accept an uncalled for insult from any one and pocket it without any special reason for it and to make no effort to defend oneself against such an unprovoked attack or insult, etc., etc.

Those who have developed true self-respect would never tolerate any of the above or similar other degrading positions.

Even as a child Bhagwan Dev Atma very conspicuously manifested this noble trait in his life.

The group of these remarkable traits which developed in Bhagwan's child soul, is such, as would constitute the richest asset in any adult and would bring him to the forefront in the world.

III

IMMUNITY FROM EVIL FORCES

If we have understood the nature of the Love of Goodness or any other Love, we can easily comprehend that a soul possessing that Love would hate its opposite or antagonistic love. If I love cleanliness, I shall hate uncleanness. If I love order and symmetry, I would feel shocked to see things in disorder and would never tolerate such a thing. If I have love for mercy, I would hate cruelty. If I love economy, I shall hate extravagance. If I possess love for industry, I shall hate sloth or a 'do-nothing' life. If I love education or mental enlightenment, I shall hate ignorance and mental darkness.

Hence when Bhagwan Dev Atma as a child, developed love of Goodness, it was but quite natural that his unique child-soul should be absolutely clean of all those evil-generating and positively evil psychic forces, which in their very nature are antagonistic to the Love of Goodness. The matchless make of Bhagwan's heart was out and out unsuited for the growth of such degenerating forces. And yet these soul-annihilating forces have dwarfed, distorted and mutilated souls of millions and have made them their own foes and the foes of the world around.

They are as under :—

(1) *Jealousy* :—What is jealousy? It is a psychic force which makes a man feel depressed or causes in him furious burning of heart at the sight of another man rising in power, position, wealth, beauty, strength, name, fame, or even at the sight of another's family, social or material well-being ; and not only does such a man pass his days, as a consequence thereof, in a hell of misery, but develops intense form of hatred for the object of his jealousy and yearns or attempts to inflict some harm or injury on that person or those connected with him. A co-wife who is herself barren not only hates a wife of her polygamous husband who has been blessed with a son, but in various cases either injures the mother or kills the innocent child. It is said of a wife of the richest man in a town who was herself barren, that she could not touch food the whole day due to the fever of jealousy when she heard that any woman in her town had given birth to a child. This jealousy sits in the heart of even the anointed kings and queens not to say anything of the poor and down trodden masses.

The very connotation of this psychic force is wishing and doing evil to others. The growth of such a poisonous plant in a heart absolutely ruled by Love of Goodness was an impossibility. Hence even as a child Bhagwan was absolutely free from such an evil force. Nay, he did not in his hereditary make-up get even a germ of this force.

(2) *Vindictiveness* :—What is meant by vindictiveness? It is a psychic force which, when it possesses any heart, moves it to cherish feeling of repulsion or hatred for a person who has rightly or wrongly inflicted pain, injury, harm or loss on him or even when he has for any reason refused to satisfy any of his wishes or desires. Thus it not only estranges his heart from that person but drives him still further to attempt to do or at least to wish harm to him. But in case he fails to do harm to him, he finds a gruesome pleasure in hearing an ill news that the subject of his vindictiveness has come to some harm. Lastly it manifests itself when any person receives any undue injury, loss or harm at the hands of another, instead of taking any necessary legal or moral steps against him in self-defence tries to do him some harm in order to revenge himself upon him. A young man not only hates but sometimes kills outright a girl who refuses to gratify his desire for a union in wedlock. It is given in the history of one of the religions, that a woman who hated a new cult not only joined in war against them but was so horribly dominated by revenge that when her enemy was killed she went into the battlefield, mutilated the corpse and even drank the blood. This feeling is said to be a prominent characteristic of the so-called One God, who is reported to have spoken in the first person plural and said that He would send to hell all those who do not praise Him but who worship other gods along with Him and that He would destroy their temples. He has ordered His believers to murder the idol-worshippers, take away their wives and cattle, and not to rest till all such persons have been annihilated. Such a virulent form of vindictiveness rules both man and his Deity.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“This soul-annihilating and most degenerating psychic force did not exist in my soul from my very birth. Its existence was absolutely antagonistic to my innate nature. I have never hated even my enemies, though I have viewed with abhorrence all such sinful act of theirs which they committed in order to inflict various forms of undue sufferings, heart-shocks and injuries on me. I have neither been permitted by my inner nature to hate even those ungrateful •followers of mine who, inspite of the multifarious favours received at my hands, have chosen to falsely malign and cruelly persecute me and to try to destroy my mission by their dark deeds of vindictiveness. I have, on the contrary, been ever prepared to serve them with a whole heart, because my love of goodness could not but impel me to act in that way.”

If only this degenerating and destructive feeling or psychic force were absent in mankind what a pall of misery would be lifted from the face of this earth?

Hinsa Bhav (or feeling or force of violence or killing others) :—What is meant by *Hinsa Bhav*? It is a low psychic force or feeling in man which finds gratification and joy in inflicting undue pain on any man or animal or in killing them outright, or without any

reasonable cause, it causes an injury to a tree or a plant, or any lifeless object, by disfiguring or mutilating them. "This extremely low and soul-life destroying force," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "did not appear in me at any time from my birth onward. Nor was it possible for such a low force to grow in me when the Love of Goodness had sprouted and developed in me."

It was this complete hatred for *Hinsa*, that led Bhagwan Dev Atma to lay down as an unalterable principle of conduct that no one was to be admitted into the membership of the Dev Samaj who did not, besides fulfilling other conditions, refrain and pledge to refrain all his life from using flesh or eggs or any preparation made therefrom under any circumstances whatsoever. Nay, every member of the Dev Samaj is pledged not even to offer flesh or eggs to others directly or through any other person. Even under medical advice, a Dev Samajist is not permitted to eat flesh or eggs or any medicine containing any of these as an ingredient. On the occasion of his 78th Birthday Anniversary, when for the last time Bhagwan graced the special meeting with his most glorious presence, while talking on *Hinsa* and particularly referring to the case of a lady member of the Dev Samaj, who had been a conniving party to her minor son's taking flesh under medical advice, he said :—"If any male or lady member of my Samaj gets ready all at once to feed his or her son on flesh with a view to save him and thus to set an example of callous disregard for animal life, I at least will stand by the poor innocent helpless animal and not compromise with such a behaviour." Besides the above, every member of the Samaj is further pledged not to kill any sentient being except when using the right of self-defence. Bhagwan forthwith suspended every male or female member of his Samaj who was guilty of such a sin.

(4) *Vanity, false pride or low love of self.*—What do we mean by *Ghamand Bhav* or low love of self? All kinds and forms of undue bias or love for 'ego' constitute false pride or low love of self. Bhagwan's heart was totally unsuited to the growth or even the sprouting of this low force. From his very childhood, Bhagwan followed what he believed to be good with absolute fidelity, little caring for any opposition from others and was quite unaffected by any fear or temptation held out by those around. This uncommon regard for goodness which Bhagwan manifested in utter disregard of adverse opinions of others, made many wrongly to jump to the conclusion that he was vain or egoistic or an obstinate person. "But," says Bhagwan "in the course of my higher evolution, as I grew better and better able to see and appreciate the higher virtues in other human beings and realized the fact of my inseparable and intimate relationship with various existences of various kingdoms of Nature, and as I gradually became convinced of the most glorious Truth that *in itself my being was nothing and nowhere and that my whole existence depended on the help of or contributions made by various existences of various kingdoms of Nature*, I was filled with true reverence and true humility. It was inevitable for me in the

course of the higher evolution of these unique highest psychic forces, which I had inherited, to gradually but surely see the reality and glory of Nature and the fact of my entire being dependant on it and to realize on the face of the ceaseless law of change that pervaded and ruled the entire Universe, that leaving aside other things even my own body was a transient thing. Accordingly, no false pride or soul-blasting and most degenerating ego or low love of self could ever grow or sprout in me."

True! Had not Dev Atma been absolutely free from this low love of self and its most degenerating and destructive effects, he would have been engulfed in the quicksands of the beliefs he had and would never have reached those heights of philosophic thought which carried him far beyond the regions traversed by all the thinkers of the world in the Past or the Present and which took from him at various stages, the toll of the sacrifice of his most cherished doctrines. Had he not been free from this harmful low love, he would not have been able to see and admire the good points in those who persecuted him in various ways and even in those darkest souls who, having received countless favours at his hands, turned Judas and engineered forces of vilest calumny, abuse, persecution and even prosecution against him.

We ourselves saw in Bhagwan, even when he had become the World Teacher, an attitude of utter homage to Truth at all times and under all circumstances. He at once threw down his weapons before, it, renounced his cherished opinions and walked the path shown by it howsoever steep it looked. We ourselves saw how he used to assume an attitude of an humble listener when any body offered a suggestion in any line in which he possessed some information. We saw how in several cases he sent his own masterly writings to some of us for criticism and new suggestions. But once he was convinced of the truth of any fact or any good-producing act, he stuck to it with the most tenacious fidelity and no amount of persecution or prosecution and no combination of adverse forces could make him budge an inch, from the line of his devotion to it.

IV

MASTERY OVER LOW FORCES.

Jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* and false vanity or low love of "self" were, as described in the last chapter, utterly absent in the psychic make-up of Bhagwan. They never manifested themselves in his life at any time and at any stage. But there were happiness-seeking low desire forces which did make their appearance in Bhagwan's soul. However none of them became a *ruling passion* of his life. All such desire forces have their roots in Happiness. Hence when they become ruling forces they grow into Low Loves. These cannot but lead to evil. Now Bhagwan's heart from childhood was ruled completely by the mighty forces of Love of Goodness and Repulsion for Evil. Hence when conflict ensued between Love of Goodness and any happiness-seeking low desire force, the latter was *always vanquished* and the former was *always victorious*. It was impossible for any of his low desire forces to over-ride Bhagwan's love for Goodness. Triumph of one meant defeat of the other. It was absolutely intolerable for Bhagwan to see evil succeed.

Bhagwan Dev Atma graciously records in his autobiography, page 44 :—

Whereas the soul-life annihilating psychic forces of jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* and false pride or inflated Ego did not at all appear in the soil of my heart, the happiness-seeking low desires which did appear in my soul, could never sway my life or dominate it. Consequently never throughout my life did I become a slave to any of them. The reason was plain. The unique love of goodness which sprouted and evolved in my soul was from my childhood, so mighty, strong and overpowering that it dominated every other psychic force in me. It had become impossible for me to abandon the path of Goodness and to follow any happiness-seeking desire at its cost, whatever pleasure it may afford. When love of Goodness and any pleasure-affording low desire force came in conflict, the former invariably triumphed. Owing to this most glorious and ever victorious force, I could not and did not at any time pay the homage of my heart to any pleasure-affording low desire force with the result that even though several such desire forces did sprout in my heart, and even though I lived and moved in world and formed various relations, I never became world worshipper and was never in undue attachment with any person, thing or object of the world and was thus never a world-bound slave."

All those millions of people, who are leading a life of bondage to various persons, things and objects of the world, and have thus never realized what a life of freedom from them could be, are led by *happiness* and not *goodness*. As they possess no light in their souls and are not able to see the results of such bondage in their

nakedness, they do not and cannot realize the damage to their soul-life. Such souls cannot and do not comprehend the grandeur and real bliss of life of freedom from any or all low desires, and hence cannot and do not appreciate and cannot long after that unique state of life. And so long as life is dominated merely by the happiness-based low desire forces all talk of higher life is unmeaning and all dream about soul evolution a fancy.

It was this complete freedom from the sway of all kinds of happiness-based low desires and the consequent detachment from persons, things and objects of the world, that kept the path of the highest life clear for Bhagwan. This freedom was a necessary precedent to the evolution of the highest psychic life in Bhagwan ; to his taking up the unique life-vow of the highest service of humanity in course of time ; to his making all kinds of sacrifices and surrenders of all his powers and possessions etc., and thus permanently leaving behind for the world an example not only of an ideal type of life evolved on this earth, but of the ideal type of devotion shown, and sacrifices and surrenders made in the fulfilment of his highest ideal.

ACQUIRED BELIEFS AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

Though love of Goodness grew and developed in Bhagwan Dev Atma's child soul and it helped to evolve various good-producing forces in him, he did not get suitable environments at Akbarpur or even for some years after leaving it, for the unfoldment of the forces of Love of Truth and Repulsion for Untruth, the germs of which, no doubt, he had inherited from his very birth.

As this pair of unique forces of Love of Truth and Repulsion for Untruth did not get proper opportunities for evolution in Bhagwan's soul, in his early life, it was but natural that he should, like the rest of human children, accept number of such false beliefs which his parents, elders and near relatives believed in as true and which they followed in their every-day life. Following are some of the fiction-grounded beliefs which he imbibed from those around him :—

1. *False beliefs in a number of gods and goddesses.*—Bhagwan believed in the existence of various gods and goddesses and even in the existence of One God whom he called Vishnu or Ishwara. He believed Rama and Krishna as the incarnations of this One God.

2. *False belief in impossible things.*—Bhagwan accepted as true the following impossible beliefs, because his nearest of kin and others believed in them to be true :—

(a) A monkey devotee of Rama called Hanuman, had with one leap crossed the strait between India and Ceylon.

(b) This monkey devotee, Hanuman, could fly in the air like so many birds. Once he flew a distance of hundreds of miles in order to bring a medicinal plant growing in the Himalayas for the use of Rama's brother Lakshman. He lifted not only that plant but the whole mountain on which such plants grew and flew back to Ceylon.

(c) A woman had been petrified into a stone by the curse of a *Rishi*. She was restored to her original living human form when Rama's feet touched her petrified figure.

(d) Ravan, the king of Lanka or Ceylon, was called "Dashanun" because he possessed ten heads.

(e) Shri Krishna had lifted up a mountain called "Gowardhan Parbat" and balanced it on one finger.

(f) When Krishna's father Vasudev, in order to save Krishna from the wrath of Kansa, was crossing the river Jumna at night with the precious burden in his arms, to Gokal from Mathura, the river Jumna swelled up to pay homage to Shri Krishna by caressing

his feet and then ebbed so low that Vasudev was able to walk on foot through the whole of its bed.

(g) In ancient times Brahmans kill used to animals. They feasted on their flesh and thus gratified their carnivorous tastes. But after eating the flesh they used to collect the bones of the butchered animals at one place, recited some *mantra* and sprinkled some drops of water over them. By this charm the dead animals were restored to their life and were once more their old self again.

(h) *Rishies* (sages of old), *Devtas* (gods) or *Rakhshas* (demons) possessed the magical power of making their body as big as they liked, dwarfing it to any minimum stature or making it as weighty or as light as they pleased. They could at will change themselves into any human or animal form. The *Rishies* possessed the power of changing at will any man or woman by a curse into the form of an animal or plant or even a stone.

3. *False beliefs relating to the fulfilment of one's worldly desires or aspirations.*—Bhagwan acquired in his childhood a belief that by repeating the name of Rama or reciting a *mantra*, or by making an offering to or worshipping some gods or goddesses, a man could have every one of his worldly desires fully realized, i.e., he could get cured from any malady, get wealth and children or obtain victory over his enemies or realize such other allied desires.

4. *False beliefs relating to absolution from sins.*—During his childhood Bhagwan acquired the following false beliefs regarding the way of salvation from various kinds and forms of sins such as :—

(a) He believed that sins get destroyed (i.e., a sinner gets freedom from the punishment for his sins) by taking a dip in a river like the Ganges etc., or in sacred ponds, or by pilgrimages to various places and having “*Darshan*,” or beatific vision, of the idols of various gods and goddesses there.

(b) He believed that sins of a man are pardoned and the sinner gets freedom from the inevitable punishment or evil effects of his sins by the repetition of the name of Rama, and even by calling his name by mistake at the hour of death. Such a saved soul goes straight to one or other paradise such as “*Baikunth*,” “*Vishnuloke*,” or “*Goloke*,” etc.

5. *False beliefs relating to food, etc.*—A centuries-old and deep-seated superstitious belief and custom prevailed among the Kanya Kubj Brahmans, according to which it was an anathema for them to partake of food prepared by any body, even though he be a Kanya Kubj Brahman, except the food prepared by a *near* relative of their *own* family. They considered that taking food prepared by those beyond their own circle was a violation of the principles of *Dharma* and it involved a spiritual degeneration. Not only was the food prepared by others forbidden but even all forms of sweetmeat preparations by others except those of milk were also forbidden. Bhagwan acquired this belief from his relations and the nearest of kin.

6. *False belief in the necessity of having recourse to falsehood.*—Bhagwan Dev Atma as a child accepted a belief which those around him cherished and practised, according to which it was permissible for any one to have recourse to any falsehood in order to save himself, from an injury or calamity or to achieve some end or object, or to help out of a scrape or trouble, any one of one's own kinsmen and relatives.

The first five forms of these false beliefs did not at all lead Bhagwan to any such course of conduct as was calculated to do—even the remotest possible—harm to any man or animal. So far as the sixth form was concerned it had a nominal effect on Bhagwan's conduct. His powerful love of goodness made it impossible for him to have recourse to such a course of conduct as could bring about any evil in relation to others. "But I remember," says Bhagwan Dev Atma "that in order to serve my purpose I had, on one occasion, given incorrect information about my age. This happened when, after passing the entrance test of the Roorkee College, I went to join it. I was aged only 16 years at that time. In those days the minimum age limit for admission to the College was 18 and the maximum was 22 or 24, which rule was however not scrupulously observed. When I went to College I found several boys who were much older in years than the maximum age limit, so much so that one Mussalman was aged even 30. No boy was asked to undergo medical examination nor was any medical certificate of age demanded. All that was done was that the Head master asked every individual boy his age which he put down in the register as a matter of course. It was then that under the influence of the above wrong teaching, I declared my age to be nineteen. I came to College some weeks after the due date of admission because the Deputy Inspector of our District, to whom a communication was sent by the College to intimate to me that I was declared eligible for admission, did not inform me of the fact for some weeks. Since I came after the date of admission, the Head Master took me to the Principal and said 'This boy besides having come late looks under-age.' The Principal thereupon asked him, 'Has any other student come to our College from such a distant place?' The Head Master said 'No, this is the first and the only boy.' 'Go and admit him,' said the Principal, 'his stay in College for two years would sufficiently mature him in years and looks.' Upon this the Head Master admitted me to the College."

7. *False beliefs regarding the use of intoxicants.*—The use of intoxicants such as *Bhang*, opium, tobacco, etc., in one or other form, was not considered improper by men of Bhagwan's family circle as well as by thousands of people around. The traditional beliefs and their own mental tendencies were in favour of their belief and practice. In the *Mandirs* dedicated to Vishun and Shivji, not only the devotees or *pujaris* took *Bhang* but they prepared large doses for the service of the visitors, as the believers in God Shivji thought that their God was pleased with his worshippers who took *Bhang*. It is honoured as Shivji's own plant and an offering of *Bhang* and *Dhatura* was and is made before the idol of God Shivji. Bhagwan's own family

people did not smoke or drink and considered them to be wrong, though hundreds of other town people thought them right. But the use of *Bhang* was not looked upon as wrong or improper even by Bhagwan's relatives. Bhagwan acquired repulsion against wine and tobacco, but not against *Bhang*. Bhagwan's own unique nature was averse to the use of any intoxicant. Hence even so far as *Bhang* is concerned, he took it probably for 4 or 5 times only and used a preparation of it about 3 or 4 times during his childhood and abjured its use for all times thereafter. Once when he was a small child, a *Vaishnav Sadhu* (so-called) who was staying in an out-house of his family residence, had prepared a strong drink of *Bhang* with milk. He gave some of it to Bhagwan. This brought on him a state of unconsciousness after a little while. His revered father and uncle got nervous and furious with the *Sadhu*. The uncle asked him to immediately vacate their house. Bhagwan recovered consciousness after some hours. This experience was never lost on Bhagwan and the fact of the evil that *Bhang* produces, made deep impression on his unique heart. Hence forth both the traditional and religious beliefs in favour of intoxicants had no influence on Bhagwan's heart.

8. *False beliefs in relation to Gambling.*—When Bhagwan was a child, those around him did not consider gambling to be wrong and improper. Is gambling viewed as an out-and-out evil even to-day? Is it not true that besides our own countrymen even some of the biggest European officials and even one or other Governor countenances it for collection of any fund for public good, by giving the weight of his position to it and calls it by the name of Lottery or Lucky Bag. Our own Hindu countrymen even to-day consider gambling quite proper on the occasion of Dewali festival and in almost every village, town and city the dens of this infamous practice are extraordinarily brisk not only on the day of Dewali but also a few days before and after that great festival. Bhagwan Dev Atma when he became a World Teacher not only prohibited the use of all intoxicants for his followers, but, besides several other evils, prohibited the practice of gambling also. No gambler can therefore be a member of the Dev Samaj.

"The false belief in relation to gambling," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "had during my childhood a nominal influence on me. The bait of winning in gambling like the zest one gets by a victory in several other games such as *Apu Tapu* (hopscotch), &c. attracted my child heart, as it offers attraction to many intelligent children. As I considered it merely one of the games—as good as any other game—I played it during my childhood either with a bet of *kauries* (shell coins) or copper coins. It is my impression that on some such occasions, I staked and lost few copper coins which, I think, did not belong to me, but was the price of some books of the school, sold by me for one of our teachers. I cannot say if this impression had any foundation in fact. But I know that when I came to Lahore, all of a sudden an idea flashed on me that I had lost some copper coins

which belonged to my teacher. The flashing of such an idea in itself was a decree on my soul and a command on me to return the money to the teacher. I have always followed this principle that even *when a suspicion crosses my mind that I owe something to another and I have no positive means of proving the suspicion to be untrue, I always give the benefit of the doubt to the other man and not to myself.* I therefore at once determined to make retribution. I sent to the teacher through my brother an amount many times more than I suspected I had lost. My brother took it to the teacher. The teacher vehemently protested that no such thing had happened in his relation and that he was not prepared to accept what, he believed, did not belong to him. But I appealed to him to accept the amount as that would give me relief. Out of regard for my feelings he accepted the amount."

The short survey of this phase of Bhagwan's life leaves on one's mind a deep impression that it is very unfortunate for one to be born in an atmosphere charged with false beliefs. The unique soul of Bhagwan was however innately adverse to assimilating for long, any false beliefs which had a tendency to produce evil. But millions of children take to the use of flesh, intoxicants, gambling and several other dangerous practices because both social and the so-called religious environments favour their growth. Most fortunate is he who is born in an atmosphere which is free from all forms of false beliefs and which is militant against all forms of gross evils. Bhagwan Dev Atma has provided that wonderfully healthy, intellectually and morally elevating atmosphere to humanity in the form of Dev Samaj. As the Dev Samaj grows in numbers and influence humanity would come to realize what a unique blessing this society is for all-round evolution of man and what a perennial fountain it provides for the highest and all sided good of man.

VI

A STEP FORWARD.

Bhagwan Dev Atma lived at Akbarpur up to the age of sixteen. He developed in that place all such higher altruistic forces based on the love of Goodness, as he could possibly do under the circumstances. His birthplace provided no better chances for his further evolution. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“I could not evolve further in my native place because the environments which surrounded me there provided no possibility for my further evolution or development in higher life. Nay, there could have been a danger of the deterioration of my soul by residing further under one or other adverse condition of that place. It was indeed a most critical period of my soul-life. I myself possessed no knowledge or consciousness in this respect. As I possessed no such consciousness up to the age of sixteen that I was possessed of the heredity of the unique powers of the highest psychic life (*i.e. Dev Jiwan*) which marked me out as a being absolutely distinguishable from the rest of mankind ; so had I no consciousness of the fact that for the preservation and further evolution of these powers, I must leave Akbarpur and go to some other more suitable place or environments. As I did not know at that time that within my chest, I possessed a singular organ called heart which pumped blood to all my arteries and thus circulated it in my entire organism and that besides heart there were two other organs called lungs which inhaled air and cleansed my blood through its oxygen, in the same way I did not know that I possessed *Dev Shakties* or highest psychic forces which were bringing about particular kind of changes in my soul. As a newly-born babe suckles milk from the bosom of its mother, breathes the air and makes water and passes stools, and thus slowly but surely develops its bodily organs and gains strength, without having even the faintest idea as to what particular foods and particular activities are responsible for the preservation and growth of his bodily organs and his strength, in the same way I had no knowledge at all that unique highest psychic forces had manifested in me and had demarcated me from the rest of mankind, and that the unfoldment of these matchless hereditary highest psychic forces was evolving *Dev Jiwan* or unique life in me. As in a garden a mango tree, though absolutely unconscious of itself, develops owing to the singular type of life power that it possesses, and through the Nature's own process, a particular form distinguishable from the neighbouring plants of *dhatura* or *ak*, in the same way the unique hereditary forces called *Dev Shakties*, which had manifested in my soul and had given to my inner life-power a new type as distinguished from all other souls of the world, continued moulding and shaping my soul in the Nature's own course of change into newer and higher *Rup* or form.

"But when I reached the age of sixteen and my soul plant found Akbarpur too narrow a pot for its further development, and it was indispensable that for its progressive unfoldment, it must seek comparatively more suitable and larger pot in some other place, a phenomenon took place in pursuance of the subtle process of evolution in Nature which was singular, significant and full of import."

That singular phenomenon was this. Bhagwan had completed all education that was available at his native place. His parents were satisfied with that much education for their beloved child. Bhagwan was actually placed as an apprentice clerk in the *Munsiff's* Court there. That would have formed the acme of ambition for any youth at Akbarpur as it meant settlement in life and scope for further promotions and progress in Government service. But Bhagwan had really tasted of the fruit of knowledge. His heart hungered for more knowledge and greater scope for growth. Hence in that appointment he felt himself as a fish out of water.

It was in this frame of mind that he chanced to hear from somebody that at a place called Roorkee there was a college which could afford him not only a scope for higher education but open up better chances of Government service. He also heard that admission to that college depended upon passing a preliminary test. This chance information took its firm root in the soil of Bhagwan's heart. It added fuel to the fire of his love for higher education. He at once applied to the authorities. He received a reply to the effect that he could appear on a specified date in the preliminary test before the Deputy Inspector of Schools of his District to whom the questions would be sent, and if he passed that test, he would be admitted to the college. The long expected day for entrance test arrived. Bhagwan was previously informed of that. He went to Cawnpore where the test was held. His answer-papers were sent to Roorkee College. He was declared eligible for admission. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

"When after passing the admission test of the Roorkee Engineering College with my own endeavours, I was prepared to go there, my father would not agree to send me to such a distant place. My mother was specially opposed to this as she did not at all like that I should live away from her eyes at a distant place for months together. But I did not yield to this improper desire of both of them and did not care at all for their opposition.

"If they do not send me of their own accord, I said to myself, I would find out a way of escape and run away. Both of them gave way before my determination. My father himself took me to Roorkee."

It is, however, regrettable that owing to the carelessness of the Deputy Inspector, Bhagwan reached Roorkee a few weeks after the date of admission. Says Bhagwan :—

"The Roorkee College authorities had sent to the Deputy Inspector of Schools a communication to the effect that I had been

declared successful and that due intimation may be conveyed to me to join the college on the 1st November, when the college session began. It is, however, sad that this communication remained undisposed of with the Deputy Inspector for many days. He sent me the information very late, when nearly three weeks of the month of November had already gone. Hence I was able to reach Roorkee for admission nearly a month late, *i.e.*, by the end of November."

REMARKABLE CHILDHOOD.

If we dispassionately review and reflect over this period of the childhood of Bhagwan Dev Atma, we are struck with its outstanding and wondrous traits. Even at that tender age Bhagwan Dev Atma had on the one hand, developed several very remarkable goodness-producing forces which led him to cherish true and unshakable respect and reverence for his parents, teachers and elders, true gratitude for his benefactors, wonderful sense of responsibility in the performance of his duties in various relations, an irrepressible feeling to impart to others the blessings of knowledge or higher life which he enjoyed, an indomitable will to do to a finish whatever work he undertook, etc., etc; and, on the other, he was not only absolutely clean of all soul-annihilating forces, *viz.*, jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* and false love of self or ego, but completely free from every form of slavery to any low desire force (*i.e.*, desire for tasteful things, for money, etc., etc.) which, in the natural course, appeared in his soul. Hence though he possessed some of those desire forces which dominate the lives of millions, he could not follow their bent at the cost of that supremely strong Love of Goodness which completely possessed his child soul. Any conflict between a low happiness-seeking desire force and Love of Goodness ended in the permanent defeat of the former.

Hence he had not only become incapable of consciously doing any wrong to any existence and of consciously following any belief or custom which was productive of evil to himself or to others, but he felt it an imperative call on him to contribute to the benefit of others whatever blessings of life he himself enjoyed. His life which was free from all those discordant notes which jar on the cosmic relations, was tuned to the notes of higher harmony with and in unison with the true service of others, and thus gave out a music which was as felicitous as it was glorious, and which accorded wonderfully with the loftiest dreams of the great philosophers in the world of thought. The height of psychic development which Bhagwan Dev Atma reached at the age of sixteen could serve as an ideal form of life for millions of human beings in this or any other land. What a garden of fragrant and hopeful plants of soul-life, bearing sweet-scented flowers of happy relations and their blissful fruits, would this planet of ours look, if mankind were, on the one hand, free from the consuming and annihilating forces of jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* and false self-love, and, on the other, brought completely under the ennobling influences of the masterful Love for

Goodness of Bhagwan Dev Atma, which would not only let no lower desire (of wealth, property, fame, power, position, sexual gratification, wife, children, personal aggrandizement, etc.) assert itself and produce evil, but would ever and anon impel man to liberally bestow those blessings on others which it has been his good fortune to be master of in this world. The present psychic state of man has converted this fair planet into a battlefield, for man has run amuck with his own self-interests and has declared war against other beings of Nature and is trampling down the rights and lives of his fellow human beings and those of other sub-human worlds. It is a war to the knife even with parents, with brother, with wife and husband, with neighbour, with citizens and with all those with whom he comes in conflict. He has not learnt to identify his own good with the good of others. He has learnt to believe that his own good demands sacrifice of the good of others. This is unfortunate. But so long as the causes exist which have warped man's mind and brought it to this perverted state, the present hellish condition would prevail. The causes are the dominant motive force of conduct, which are the happiness-based low loves and low hates. Looking at the dreadful state of man, one great dreamer of America who wrote that most famous book, *Kingdom of the Unselfish*, asked a pertinent question :—

“ Is there then no possibility of human natures becoming so moralized or spiritualized or progressed that individual can stand alone in his goodness ; incapable of consciously doing a wrong to any living creature or failing to right an undesigned one ; and beyond the liability of falling away from his union with all good souls. Here in this material organism full of its natural desires and impulses ; here where all is now discord and conflict and sin and sorrow ; here where the human race has its natural roots and where already it has attained partial growth, can it not continue to grow, to develop its beauty and fragrance, its full-grown ripened fruit in all perfection ? It is my duty to assert, it can.” (Page 72).

True ! This singular child of only sixteen years had completed even at that tender age in his unique life, more than the above ideal of life of this great dreamer. Such a life Mr. Lord John Peck—the author of the *Kingdom of the Unselfish*—calls the perfect life. With Bhagwan Dev Atma that wonderfully fragrant life marked merely the beginning of that most marvellous *Dev Jiwan* which developed to full-grown ripened fruit later on and made him *Dev Atma*, as contradistinguished from all *Manush Atma* (or human souls)—small or great—who, have or had peopled this planet of ours or inhabit it now.

Human souls, however great, can dream of no higher stage than the one portrayed or pictured by that illustrious author. But even that stage is such which all world religions with centuries of work, and in certain cases with hundreds of centuries of work, have not been able to realise in the ranks of their own followers. All the powers of wealth, of a kingdom, of military and civil administration of one God without a second, of thunders, of the ‘ so-called pro-

phets, of fanciful miracles, of the so-called *Gurus*, God's messengers or son or sons of God, of all the forms of revelations, terrors of hell and promises of heaven have not singly or collectively brought about that millennium. Nothing else could have revealed the impotence and absolute unworthiness of the so-called world religions than their utter and absolute failure to humanise and spiritualize man to such an extent as to make him incapable of consciously doing any harm to others and capable of rendering to the utmost extent and without any selfish motives willing service to others. Nay, all the followers of any religion are not free even from one gross sin such as adultery, theft, gambling, etc., etc., not to say of the more subtle sins. It is true many of them have admitted their utter hopelessness and helplessness to grapple with human nature in its present perverted state by confessing that sin is to be forgiven and not cured. The same author thus talks of the mental state of despair which has possessed the mind of theologians. He says, "Very few believe they can attain to a sufficient degree of perfection here to save them from consciously committing sins."

The joys, the blessings, the most felicitous fruits which resulted out of the psychic state of heart which Bhagwan Dev Atma developed at the age of sixteen, which went beyond even the dream of the great dreamer, are thus expressed by Bhagwan himself, who alone was competent to directly apprehend and describe what was peculiarly his own mental state:—

"Being above the bondage of all forms of low loves of wealth, prosperity, name, fame, power, position, bodily or sensual pleasures—and being free from my very birth from the presence of the soul-annihilating forces of jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* and false pride or ego, I naturally possessed a singular mental state and enjoyed the blessings of peace, calm and sweet concord, so long as I was undisturbed by any severe bodily pain or by any pain inflicted on me by low men or others. That high mental state was the one great abiding wish of my life. Beyond this psychic state (*i.e.*, the strange sweet quietitude and harmonious state of soul) I had no wish, no longing for the gratification of any of my desire forces or any bodily rest or comfort or sensual joy."

Can we not call this childhood the most wonderfully fascinating childhood, the most glorious childhood, the one sure forerunner of that supremely elevated psychic life or *Dev Jiwan* which Bhagwan Dev Atma succeeded in ultimately developing in his singular soul. Man is primarily a soul. His body is merely a vehicle though a necessary one. How unfortunate are they who develop only that group of forces which directly lead to bodily pleasures or sensual gratifications and either destroy or starve out those higher forces which not only build soul-life but introduce men to a higher plane which is not without its charms, and which charms far outweigh in wholesomeness and sweetness, any charms possessed by low sensual or body-gratifying forces. The ease, the facility and the callousness with which man sacrifices higher forces of higher character, when his

bodily needs or world-worship demand it, is a sight which must make a higher soul weep tears of blood. Hence it is true that those millions who have been or are dominated by low desire forces and possess no higher feelings, would not be able to directly apprehend instinctively realise or feelingly appreciate the most blessed mental state which Bhagwan lived at the age of sixteen. But as humanity grows in higher life it would better and better realise the beauty and glory of that wonderful and remarkable soul state which Bhagwan developed up to that age.

PART III
DISCIPLESHIP

I

ROORKEE.

It was in the last week of the month of November 1866 when Bhagwan Dev Atma was hardly sixteen years of age that he joined the lower subordinate class in the Thomson College of Engineering at Roorkee. His revered father personally took him there. He was the youngest student in the college. It is also significant that no student from his native place had ever ventured to go there to receive higher education. Neither then, nor for half a century thereafter did any student go from Akbarpur to Roorkee for education. His own parents did not encourage him to go there. Nay, they offered strong opposition. No friend or relation countenanced his plan. It was his own awakened love for education which roused in him the ambition to make a capital out of this chance suggestion and to enter the new avenue for higher education. He did not permit any obstacle to stand in his way. Such is the drama that Bhagwan Dev Atma's innate higher forces (when awakened under suitable environments) have played all along in his unique march on the path of his unique career on this planet.

Entry into Roorkee brought Bhagwan into an altogether new world of environments. At Akbarpur he was in one kind of sphere of life and thought. At Roorkee he came into a different kind of sphere which opened up new possibilities and offered a wider scope for new experiences.

Bhagwan Dev Atma came of an absolutely orthodox and strictly conservative community of Brahmans to whom *it was an anathema to take food prepared even by a Brahman, not belonging to their family*. It is a common saying about Kanya Kubj community to which Bhagwan Dev Atma belonged, that if there are *eight* Kanya Kubj Brahmans to cook their food there should be *nine* hearths—the ninth being reserved for providing burning fuel to the eight separate hearths of the eight men. Brought up as he was up to the age of sixteen in the world of his own family environments, it could not occur to Bhagwan Dev Atma that there was anything wrong about such a separatism and that it was based on a false religious superstition. Hence when he joined the college, as a matter of course, he cooked his food with his own hands. This entailed not only personal inconvenience but the loss of his precious time which he was anxious to devote to his studies. But his acquired belief kept him to it in spite of all the inconvenience that he had to face and the loss of time that he had to suffer.

At Roorkee he saw a new sight. It was a kind of new experience to him. It stimulated his thinking. He saw that nearly all the other Hindu students studying in the college had common kitchens and engaged Brahman servants to cook for them. All these students

took meals prepared by these Brahman cooks. They did not believe that taking meals prepared by such a cook cost them their *Dharma* "How can I lose my *Dharma* by taking meals prepared by Brahman when so many of my Hindu college-mates do not"? was the question that at once cropped up in his mind. After some hard thinking he came to the conclusion that his family people laboured under a misapprehension if they thought that one should not take food prepared even by a Brahman not belonging to their own family. It had been all along the strongest and the most invariable trait in the character of Bhagwan Dev Atma to stand true to his light under all circumstances. For him to see any truth meant that it must be accepted and practised. Hence when he was convinced of the superstitious nature of his belief regarding food, he at once abjured it. This was not an ordinary step for him, specially in the year 1867 when it was considered almost a crime to think independently. This boy of hardly seventeen summers resolved that as soon as he went home at the end of his first session, he would place his own difficulties before his father and tell him plainly that he was not prepared to waste any longer his precious time in cooking, and that if his father chose, he could provide him with a member out of his relations to cook for him. Failing that he determined to definitely and distinctly tell his father that he would dine with his college mates in one of the common kitchens.

The first session was over. Bhagwan Dev Atma passed his first year examination with credit. He went home on long vacation. He at once placed his difficulties before his father, in the plainest terms possible, about cooking food with his own hands and his personal views about the food superstition. By chance his revered father who was himself keen on the food superstition, was able to provide him with a cook belonging to his own family circle. This arrangement did not affect in the least the change of belief that took place in the growing and progressive mind of Bhagwan Dev Atma. The false superstition about food touchability had vanished in him for ever from the time of conviction. This marked the beginning of Bhagwan Dev Atma's *awakening to reason in matters of belief*.

Though very keen and observant of all that took place in the world around him, Bhagwan did not mix much with his class or college mates or others. By nature and temperament he loved to be alone as far as he could. He would not take part in their idle gossip, useless talk and discussion about other's quarrels, marriages, property, etc., slander, wasteful hilarity, playing pranks, vexing man or animal by teasing, etc. By himself he rarely sought the society of others or went to their rooms. Rarely did he invite any boy to his own quarters, even for ordinary social talk, but never for idle or useless conversation. His growing sense of duty and love of knowledge kept him at his books at all reasonable times. In leisure hours his religious temperament and devotional bent of mind kept him busy in repeating the name of the Legendary God Rama. This religious exercise appeared to him a most profitable occupation and a sort of solace to his mind. According to his acquired belief which he

cherished then, he considered treasuring up the memory of Rama and repeating his sacred name whenever free, as directly conducive to his soul welfare and also helpful in warding off evil or impending calamity and bringing about the full fruition of his right wishes.

It was during his first session when he was sixteen years of age that the great Kumbh Fair took place at Hardwar—a place of pilgrimage and of thousand religious associations to Hindus. Millions as a rule congregate at this great fair, as mere pilgrimage on such an occasion is believed by Hindus to be pregnant with immeasurable blessings. Bhagwan Dev Atma had received such a belief from his family environments and he considered a dip in the Mother Ganges on such an auspicious occasion as conducive to some great good. He could not therefore, afford to let slip such an opportunity for spiritual benefit. He, therefore, went with some Hindu fellow students to Hardwar. The entire management of the gigantic fair was in the hands of the Government.

Next day at dawn after the morning call, while returning he was caught up in a huge procession consisting of several thousands of *Bairagees* (a sect of Hindu *Sadhus*) which was marching according to the settled programme as one tremendous avalanche of nude human mass with only a *langoti* (a small piece of loin-cloth). They moved with such a force and velocity that Bhagwan several times feared that he would fall down by the impact of the human wall coming behind him and would be trampled down and crushed to death. Bhagwan Dev Atma was only sixteen and a few months old. He had clothes on and a *lota* in one hand and a stick in the other. He had also shoes on his feet. The monstrous mob pressure from behind which nothing could curb or control and which gathered momentum in proportion to the emotional fervour of these people anxious in hot haste to reach *Har ki Pauri*, was indeed too much for this unique child. He felt that he was caught up in an eddy and his feet did not touch the solid earth and he moved without effort. Somebody advised Bhagwan to put off his shoes and throw away his stick. A sound advice indeed and easy to comply with otherwise. But in that fearful wave he found even that light task to be Herculean. He had to make a special effort to rid himself of these encumbrances. At last *Har ki Pauri* was reached. In the joy of having reached a place which he dearly cherished and which he considered then as full of piety for the pilgrims, he forgot everything—all the trouble and inconvenience that he had suffered in that procession. He dipped into the water for his own good. But even at that time when even one dip was full of danger as everyone of the huge procession was feverishly anxious to have a dip and the pilgrims pushed and elbowed each other, Bhagwan remembered his *parents* and *benefactors*. He could not bear to have a dip only for his own good. He was anxious to have dips for the welfare of their souls too. Hence he did not leave the place until he had succeeded in having more dips there for the good of his benefactors. This was a singular trait in Bhagwan. From the age of ten this feeling had become a masterful force in him. *He could not partake himself alone of what he felt to be good.*

He felt a strong urge within him to share it with others. At Hardwar too this masterful force compelled him even in that precarious condition to have dips for the good of his parents too. It was this force of feeling for the good of others which gathered momentum with years and became his prime motive force in all the activities of his life, and at last it prepared him to make the grandest sacrifice of his life, *i.e.*, embrace a unique life-vow at the age of thirty-two when he dedicated his all for the highest good of the world. What a tremendous toll of sufferings and sacrifices, renunciations and self-surrenders that step exacted from the Master would ever stand as a monument to the superhuman self-abnegations which Dev Atma made for the sheer love of all that is good and true and which we intend to describe further on in their proper place.

II

A CHANCE MEETING.

During the second session of his college life an event happened which was of a mighty import and significance so far as Bhagwan Dev Atma's higher evolution was concerned. It occurred quite unplanned and unpremeditated by him or any other human being, yet it illustrates that Bhagwan's entry into Roorkee had a far greater promise in its hold than the mere prospect of higher education and worldly progress. This event was never anticipated by Bhagwan.

In the course of evolution of Bhagwan's life this episode too, like many others, was one of very great significance that led to the facilitation of the unfoldment of his inherited unique psychic forces and accomplishment of that supreme mission for which his unique life was intended.

It was the occasion of the great Hindu festival of Holi, in the month of March 1868. The college was closed. The Hindu students as usual had collected funds to celebrate this festival. One item of their programme was to go in a body to the houses of their Hindu teachers, to play Holi with them and enjoy the occasion. Bhagwan Dev Atma too accompanied his fellow-students. They all went to the house of a Kaisth teacher in the city. By chance there was also present a singular personality on that occasion. Bhagwan had never seen him before, nor had he seen Bhagwan before. And yet as soon as they saw each other, a very sweet, holy and higher psychic attraction sprouted in their hearts for each other. This was their introduction. No third man's hand was there. This was a very wonderful incident in the hidden working of Nature. This contact with the great personality was of supreme value for the higher evolution of Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul powers. Hence according to the glorious process of evolution extant in Nature, this event was bound to happen as it actually did happen. *Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique psychic forces sought their own suitable environments for their unfoldment.* This attraction was silent. It was unnoticed. But nevertheless it proved to be of mighty import for the whole history of the human race. This event was an indispensable link in the chain of Bhagwan's evolution towards the intended supreme object of his unique and glorious manifestation.

III

GURU.

The full name of that singular personality—the future *Guru* of Bhagwan Dev Atma—was Pt. Shiv Dayal Singh. He was born in 1836 at Meerut. He was a Saraswat Brahman. His father, whose full name was Pt. Gulab Singh, held a post of Police Inspector at Bhognipur, District Cawnpore before the outbreak of Mutiny in 1857. Subsequently he was appointed Tahsildar at Hamirpur where he died in 1859.

Shri Pt. Shiv Dayal Singh joined Roorkee College at the age of twenty or twenty-one. He passed his final test and was able to secure an appointment on the college itself. He became the Curator of the Central Instrument Depot there. He also served as Meteorological Observer and his combined salary was Rs. 110 per mensem a very decent pay in those days.

He was an extraordinarily diligent and upright man. His sense of duty was simply magnificent and singularly rare in our land. Whenever his superiors entrusted him with any official duty, he put forth all his powers to perform it as best as he could. It did not matter with him at all if any one supervised his work or not. There is an incident in his life which would amply illustrate the beauty and strength of this rare trait of character.

As already mentioned he was also Meteorological Observer. This post, besides other things, required of him and two others who worked under him to faithfully observe and record *every* hour, the barometer and thermometer. This duty lasted for full 48 hours continuously during day and night. Panditji found with pain, that his two subordinates who were placed on duty as required, slept away the whole night and filled in the approximate readings of weather from their own imagination. He, therefore, volunteered his own services even in their places, and used to wake up the whole night to honestly and correctly take the readings every hour as his duties required, and thus record the exact condition of weather and correct readings of various instruments.

Once in 1868 it so happened that he and Bhagwan Dev Atma talked on some serious subjects up to the small hour of the night, when suddenly sleep overpowered them both. After some time Panditji jumped up from his bed as if painfully stung. It was not physical pain but the moral sting by his sense of duty. He ran to the place where the instruments stood. He consulted his watch and found that he was late by a few minutes. There was none to notice this small lapse. But his high sense impelled him to punish himself for it by dealing several boxes on his head and he several times expressed his intense regret for it in other ways too.



RISHI SHIV DYAL SINGH JI M
Bhagwan's Great Guru

Besides this he could not bear to render any heart miserable or unhappy. If at any time in a moment of just indignation, he used harsh language towards his subordinates, which he believed to be stronger than the occasion required, his heart would pinch him, and he would feel a strong impulse to make amends for it. Once it so happened that he rebuked a subordinate for some dereliction of duty. After some time he felt that the rebuke administered was more than was merited by that man. His repentance grew. He imposed a fine on himself in order to lessen the chances of such outbreaks of temper. He paid that amount to the subordinate concerned. Then alone did he find peace of mind.

Rishiji's sense of sexual purity was as keen and high as his other senses. His life was above reproach and even above suspicion. His sense of fidelity to marriage troth was sublime. Once a man, who found it hard to believe anybody in this world to be so pure and above temptation as Rishiji was, is reported to have devised a plan to subject him to a sore trial and thus have a direct proof of what he had heard. He engaged the services of a beautiful but wicked woman to lure him from his path of purity and sexual fidelity and bring about his moral fall. This woman tried all her fascinations and charms and wicked ways to entrap Rishiji within her meshes. But she met with a merited and well-deserved discomfiture. This trial through which, all unknown to himself, Rishiji passed without any effort, raised him several degrees higher in the estimation of not only that man but of all those who were aware of this trap laid for his fall.

Rishiji was very humble. He possessed genuine repulsion for undue ego or false sense of self-importance. He was ever watchful of his actions and even thoughts in this connection. He was a severe self-critic. If he ever came to know of any of his acts, in relation to others, dictated and influenced by his false ego, he did not rest till he had, by exercise of penance, purification, etc., rid himself of its influence for the future. He had committed to memory several beautiful sayings and couplets showing the beauty and sublimity of the sense of humility. He would repeatedly sing them just to deepen their impression on his heart and to add to his force of repulsion for vanity and undue self-esteem.

He was free from every undue attachment for money or what wealth stood for. He served in the college in order to have independent means of subsistence for himself and his big family. There were several persons who were dependent on him. He had a wife and three sons. He had one daughter, widowed mother, his grandfather, widowed maternal aunt and her two minor children. Every month when he got his pay, he did not keep a pie with himself but handed the whole sum to his family people.

It is to be highly regretted that none but his grandfather valued his great soul and showed true respect and reverence for him. The ladies of the house used to have domestic quarrels which pained Rishiji very much. Hence he rarely entered the private quarters

but passed his time in his *baithak* (visitors' room) in which he lived and slept during all the seasons of the year even when the summer heat was intense and unbearable. Though married and father of four children, he was free from that bondage of undue attachment to wife and children, which proves a curse to millions.

Rishiji was not a slave to low loves of taste and fashion. He had no particular attraction for the dainty dishes or costly garments. He partook of any kind of food prepared in his house and placed before him. He wore clothes which his grandfather managed to get prepared for him.

He passed most of his leisure in contemplation over some higher subject or in *jap*. His intensely religious and devotional temperament was the supreme motive force of his life.

Bhagwan's *Guru*, Rishi Shiv Dayal Singh, possessed wonderful power of forbearance. He would like to patiently put up with any wrong or injury done to him by others. Nay, he would not like to take necessary measures even to protect himself from the aggressive attempts of others to slander him or inflict pain on him or subject him to any loss. It so happened that the officer under whom Rishiji (as he was addressed by Bhagwan) served in the Meteorological Department wanted the services of an English-knowing clerk. On being pressed by a friend of his he recommended one of his relations for the post. This new recruit was not a good man. He was soon found guilty of an act of moral turpitude and dismissed. The elder brother of the clerk, approached Rishiji, laid before him the story of his brother's and his family's misfortunes, and said that his brother was passing through a fire of deep remorse, and that he had repented very much and was willing to turn a new leaf in his life if he was given one more chance to vindicate himself. This sight of pain and misery of a human family was too much for the tender heart of Rishiji. This appeal went home to his heart and he got the man reinstated on the clear undertaking that he would behave better and give no cause for complaint to him or to his officer.

This was the second good turn that Rishiji did to him. A dog would show permanent gratitude if once served. Even a lion is known to have refused to pounce upon a benefactor though famishing with hunger. Even a dacoit is known to have forgone the chance of capturing an easy and rich prey when he came to learn that the victim had once been his benefactor. But this English-knowing clerk manifested ingratitude which was simply staggering.

This man was a spendthrift. He spent beyond his income and was thus in chronic need of money. To control his wants and keep himself within bounds was too much for him. He had therefore to pay his bills from somewhere. In order to do so, he had again a recourse to a criminal act. One day instead of making a bill for Rs. 300 he made one for Rs. 600, put in a forged signature and got it cashed. He thus misappropriated Rs. 300 out of it. This

fraud was not detected for a long time. But at last the sin was out. When the accounts were audited in the office of the Accountant-General, the forgery stood exposed. When he was faced with this exposure, he felt simply stunned. In his bewilderment he went to Rishiji and others for advice. Rishiji advised him to go to his officer, make a clean breast to him of the whole affair and pay off the amount shown against him as unexplained and unaccounted for. He did go to the officer. He confessed his guilt before him. But he did not take any money with him. He agreed to pay off the amount by regular instalments. What an easy chance he had to escape from the just consequences of such a serious crime.

But the worst was to come. As soon as the brother of his came to know of the affair—the brother who had appealed to Rishiji to get him reinstated after his first dismissal—he took up a most horrible attitude. Instead of reprimanding his brother—the culprit—for having again fallen into evil ways, he told him, “Brother! do you not see that all this calamity has fallen upon you directly due to an act of Rishiji Shiv Dayal Singh. How could a European officer have come to know of this if Rishiji had not apprised him of it? Now we must not leave him alone. Let us drag him along with ourselves and make him relish the fruit of his meddlesomeness. Go and tell your Sahib that you alone had not embezzled the money, that you had another accomplice who had shared the spoil with you and that other man was none other than Rishi Shiv Dayal Singh. Why should we pay the whole amount? Let him also pay half.”

What a perfidious act! What a black and infamous conspiracy!! What an ingratitude in relation to a benefactor!!!

The wicked man did go, as advised, to his European officer and laid this infamous accusation against Rishiji. This open accusation lodged against Rishiji involved him in great trouble. He felt an indescribable shock. His anguish of mind was too great for words. The European officer summoned Rishiji and said, “Rishiji! though I am personally convinced of your innocence, yet you have to go to court to clear your own conduct of this grave charge levelled against you, and get the delinquent adequately punished.” This was a sore trial for this noble-hearted man. It was out of sheer necessity that he had recourse to court. Had he not done so, he would surely have lost his own appointment—the only source of the livelihood for his family—and suffered other troubles. In utter self-defence he had to move the legal machinery. The case was clear. The wicked clerk was found guilty and convicted to a term of rigorous imprisonment. The state of Rishiji’s personal feelings in this matter can be gauged from the following quotation from a letter of his which he wrote to Bhagwan Dev Atma at Bahawalpur. Rishiji wrote:—

“I have suffered an indescribable pain in this matter. Had I had any other source of maintenance for myself and my family,

I would rather have given up my appointment than filed a complaint against Babu. The duty of a *faqir* (one unattached) is to bear and forbear."

Besides this his soul was equipped with many and various altruistic forces. He felt deeply for any person in want or in pain. Whenever he came to know of the ill-health of any of his relations or if any of them was in any difficulty, he would forthwith go to help him. Sometimes his sympathy for others transgressed the limits of his personal means. He would in that case even incur debt and with that amount relieve the needs of others.

Rishi Shiv Dayal Singh was a *Vedantist* by faith. According to his cult he believed this whole universe and all that it contained to be an illusion, and all attachment for the world to be positively fatal to soul-life. He never had anything or any gain of this world as the goal of his life and therefore possessed no longing to have them. He considered this world or universe to be something unreal and *Brahm* alone as true and real existence, and the realisation of *Brahm* or absorption in him as the only real goal of life. All his daily religious exercises were directed to the achievement of this ideal. He was, as a matter of course, attached to nothing, neither wife, nor children, nor money, nor praise, nor, blame, nor favour, nor frown of the world, etc., etc.

He was a great student of *Bhagwad Gita* which he read and pondered over and over again.

He was very prayerful in his attitude. He used to offer deep and fervent prayers in order to realise his *Brahm* and to fan bright, in his heart, the flame of love for Him. From the time that Bhagwan Dev Atma accepted him as *Guru* and was regularly initiated as his disciple along with his noble-hearted and most promising consort, Rishi Shiv Dayal Singh remembered them both in his daily prayers.

Rishi Shiv Dayal Singh's idea about renunciation can be gathered from the following quotation which we cull from one of his letters to Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

" O *Brahm Das* (servant of God *Brahm*) we should get merged in *Brahm*. Renunciation does not mean cutting off all ties or connections with wife, children, house, etc., but it means freedom from the veil of *Maya*. Man should learn to consider all that he sees as nothing but *Brahm*. He must come to believe all and everything as *Brahm*. One should rest content in God's will and never complain.

" It does not behove us to boast. It is proper for us to remain ever content with His will. If a man fails to do this, he becomes an heir to incalculable pain and sufferings. To suppress ego and harmonise our existence with *Brahm's* will is the only true *Sadhan*."

IV

SOME INJUNCTIONS.

This singular personality, Shri Rishiji, who regulated his own life according to the goal he cherished in his mind, naturally desired to mould Bhagwan's life too after that pattern. In order to do so he laid down for him some instructions to carry out in his daily life and in order to perform certain religious exercises before he initiated him as a disciple. These were as under :—

1. IN RELATION TO "BRAHM."

Realising oneself present in everything and to impress this fact on one's mind that though our bodies are separate there is one soul or *Brahm* who permeates in us all.

2. IN RELATION TO "GURU."

To have full faith in *Guru* and to do nothing in opposition to his good advice or guidance.

3. IN RELATION TO PARENTS.

To consider mother and father as worthy of worship and to serve them as such.

4. IN RELATION TO OTHERS.

Never speak an untruth even though you find that by so doing you will have to face troubles and undergo loss.

Do not indulge in idle or frivolous talk with anybody. If you have to talk with others, talk on some useful subjects. Speak ill of none. Do not even listen to the slanderous talk of others. If somebody tries to talk with you against others, you should stop him from doing so. You should tell him that he should talk to you about "God."

5. BEAR AND FORBEAR.

If anybody talks ill of you or even abuses you, you should patiently bear that and keep quiet. Do not wish evil to him but wish him well. If you feel his evil talk or abuse to be disagreeable or painful, you should dismiss the man by saying "May God bless you!"

6. IN RELATION TO DAILY LIFE.

In the world you must learn to consider yourself as the worst of all, and all others to be better than yourself.

Do not get angry. If the passion overpowers you, think it to be an evil. Control yourself against it.

Always remember death. Repeat this saying often to yourself, "Body is a myth, *Brahm* alone is Truth. All that appears is transient."

You should so crush the feeling of ego that you may level the "self" to nothing. Never harbour any thought that you would feel happy if you possessed this or that thing or it would be better if you were cured of the disease ; but always endeavour to pass happy and contented amidst all kinds of circumstances, considering them to be the commands of God.

INITIATION AS A DISCIPLE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's own inner nature sought out the *Guru* whom we in Dev Samaj also remember as Rishiji. It was the same inner nature which bound him with the ties of wonderful devotion and reverence to his *Guru*. The same inner light suggested to him to get regular initiation as a disciple. There was none to advise him to take up that necessary step. Even Rishiji never asked him to have regular initiation. Bhagwan sounded him and succeeded in winning his approval. But as was natural with him he did not want to have the blessings alone for himself but he prepared his noble wife too to share them with him. Her's too was a singular soul which very promptly assimilated all that her beloved husband intended for her. She was not only no drag on him but a real companion to him in his unique march. Hence she very gladly fell in with his proposal and both made special preparations for the blessed ceremony.

It was Bhagwan's special trait that he viewed everything connected with his soul welfare with feelings of special reverence and sacredness. This was an auspicious occasion. It had direct reference to his soul evolution. Hence he endeavoured to match outward neatness and cleanliness to inward purity and preparedness. The *pucca* floor of the house was not only swept clean but washed with water. A *bedi* was placed in a corner decorated all around with flowers for the purpose of performing *Havan*. The necessary materials for the *Havan* were also provided. Besides this, three pairs of *dhoties* and sheets all coloured with ochre and a pair of rosaries were kept ready. After taking a full bath Rishiji, Bhagwan and his consort put on the above coloured dresses prepared for the occasion. After this *Homa* ceremony was performed, Rishiji whispered a *mantra* to each one of them which he directed them not to disclose to anybody. Upto the last day of his life on this earth, Bhagwan kept the secret *Mantra* to himself as promised. When this was over both disciples took a sip from the water touched by the feet of the *Guru*, made a deep and reverential obeisance and received *Guru's* benedictions. This brought the singular ceremony to a close. This took place on the 8th of July, 1870.

"After we were duly initiated," says Bhagwan, "we commenced performing various religious exercises on the lines our *Guru* had laid down for us. Daily at the appointed time we took our bath, put on the ochre coloured dress, completed the prescribed number of *mantras* and *gayatri*, recited some *stotaras*, wrote with red *sandal* the name of Rama on paper upto the prescribed number, meditated on the inner *rup* (or qualities) of our *Guru*, and offered prayers for the deepening of the ties of affection among ourselves

for our welfare. After all this I used to stand in sunshine and repeat the *mantra* whispered to me by my *Guru*. Thereafter I concentrated my attention on my own shadow and then gradually lifted my gaze towards skies and tried to see there the reflection of my own face. I was told that by this particular kind of *Sadhan* I shall be able to foretell my death forty days before, when I missed to see this reflection." (Autobiography, Vol. II, p. 132.)

At some other place Bhagwan thus expresses the condition of his feelings after he was initiated :—

"When I was aged about twenty years and a half I was initiated along with my wife as a disciple. We both cherished feelings of deep reverence for our *Guru*. We had most implicit faith in his teachings. Every word of his we treasured in our hearts. Every injunction he laid on us was felt by us as our supreme duty to fully comply with and we found satisfaction in that." (Autobiography, Vol. II, p. 41.)

Bhagwan stayed there at Roorkee for about two months after he was initiated. Since by self study Bhagwan had learnt enough English to pass the upper subordinate examination, the Principal sent up his name along with the names of other similarly qualified persons to the Government of India for being appointed as overseers. The Government posted Bhagwan in the railway service. As a Government servant he had no choice but to leave Roorkee. Rishiji too did not brook the idea of Bhagwan's resigning his Government job. Hence with an aching heart at the separation from his *Guru*, Bhagwan left for Bahawalpur, where he was posted. He, however, entertained a belief that a chance would again open for him to get back to Roorkee and thus be with his *Guru* who was permanently posted there. Bhagwan's consort had to be sent back to Akbarpore to live in the family. Thus all the three souls bound to each other by most sacred and strongest ties of devotion and loyalty had to suffer separation and the consequent pangs. In his new appointment Bhagwan's emoluments amounted to Rs. 105 per month.

Bhagwan began his service in his new post. High sense of duty compelled him to put in his best efforts to do his duties honestly and as best as he could. His immediate officers were naturally satisfied with his work. But says Bhagwan :—

"I felt myself to be a captive. I passed my time in sadness and gloom. Ever and anon I prayed hard for circumstances to change which may enable me to leave my present environments and go and sit at the feet of my *Guru* at Roorkee. Our *Guru* too passed unhappy time at our separation from him. The wishes of us all, to again come together were deep and full. Hence we all prayed fervently and sincerely for the early accomplishment of our object. Besides this I had, according to the superstition that I then held, repeated twenty-five thousand times, a *mantra* of some goddess which, I was told, was a sure charm to lead to the success of our



MATA PUJNIA SHRIMATI LILAWATI JI AGNIHOTRI
The first wife of Bhagwan

object. After some months an opening occurred. The post of Head Surveying Master fell vacant in the Roorkee College. I at once sent an application for it. After lengthy correspondence for some months, I succeeded in getting the post. My transfer was gazetted. In the month of July 1872, I handed over charge and with boundless joy I left for Roorkee. I had to face great hardships and troubles on the way before I safely reached the destination." (Autobiography Chapter XIII.)

VI

FATAL MALADY AND END.

One can imagine the feelings of a loving and devoted disciple on the prospect of soon reaching Roorkee, the place of supreme sacredness to him because his *Guru* stayed there. This boundless love was the one mighty force that kept Bhagwan's spirits buoyant during his journey when he had to face dangers and difficulties. As soon as he had crossed the Sutlej in the boat at Adam Vahan, a terrific storm burst. The bridge of river Bias at Phillaur was damaged, nay, practically smashed. The river was in furious flood. In the mid stream the waves were simply riotous. Bhagwan, however, marched on to cut short the period of separation from his *Guru*. At one place he was caught up by the fury of the elements and his life was in danger. His dynamic force of love enabled him to keep cool and collected, to face the furies and to safely wade through dangers. These unexpected obstructions and dangers materially interfered with the set programme of his journey and delayed his arrival at Roorkee. Rishiji who possessed bountiful affection for his unique disciple, grew restless at this unexplained delay and wrote to Bhagwan's father in his letter dated 13th July, 1872 :—

“I have up to now received no definite news about the whereabouts of dear Shiv Narayan. This has caused me so much pain that God alone knows it. If you know anything about him please inform me at once. I have just now sent a telegram to his officer at Bahawalpur. As soon as I get a reply I shall let you know.”

The anxiety to meet each other was both mutual and too deep for words. Bhagwan had purchased a pair of fine woollen sheets and other things from Amritsar to lay them at the feet of his *Guru* when he arrived there. Thus he had made both outward and inward preparation for the longed-for and most felicitous meeting.

As soon as Bhagwan arrived at Roorkee he hurried to his *Guruji's* house. But to his extreme sorrow he found his beloved *Guruji* laid up with high fever. As soon as he saw his devoted disciple standing by him, Rishiji's heart leapt with joy. He jumped from his bed and took Bhagwan in his loving arms. He felt new inspiration and new life. He even accompanied Bhagwan to the house which Bhagwan had rented for himself. Bhagwan appealed to him not to exert himself. But Rishiji would not listen. “Now that you have come, I hope I shall get all right,” he said. After seeing Bhagwan safely settled in his new house, he returned to his own rooms.

Sad to say that Rishiji's disease showed no signs of abatement. Three or four days after, *i.e.*, on 24th July his disease took a serious turn to paralysis. On the 27th July he grew unconscious.

After some more days the second half of his body too was paralysed.

Doctor Thomson, who besides being a professor in the college, was in charge of the Meteorological Department and who had therefore ample chances to know the high character of Rishi Shiv Dayal Singhji (Bhagwan's *Guruji Maharaj*) possessed very high esteem for his noble and upright life. The Doctor said that during his whole stay in India, he had not come across a single Indian possessed of such a high character. This European officer, though a doctor did not ordinarily practise medicine. He, however, visited Rishiji's house to treat him as a labour of love. He also prescribed for him. Under his instructions Rishiji was removed to college barracks in better sanitary conditions. But even this change did him no good. Hence he was brought back to his residential quarters. Here his condition grew worse. Dr. Thomson visited him as usual. One day he saw the face of his patient and found the signs of approaching death. His heart was moved. His eyes became tearful. He whispered, "Poor Shiv Dayal Singh! He is dying." This was true. He died shortly after, at the age of 36 years only. The pain and anguish that Bhagwan and his consort felt at the death of their *Guru* can better be imagined than described.

So long as Rishiji was ailing this unique disciple of his, not only attended to his own duties, but carried on the official duties of his *Guruji* too. When off duty he used to pass all his time by the bed-side of his *Guruji* and nursed and tended him. He sometimes lost himself so completely in various duties connected with the great patient, that he forgot to attend to his own daily needs. Once at midnight some ice was required for the patient. Bhagwan at once prepared to go. In a hurry he could not find his shoes. But he did not care. With his tender feet all bare to the hard earth and the pointed pebbles which lay on the way, he hurried out to fetch the ice. The night was dark. Stumbling and falling, he at last reached the shop and brought ice for the use of Rishiji.

It is indeed most painful that such a jewel passed off from this earth so early.

But little did Rishiji at that time know or realise that a soul, who was drawn to him by the mysterious psychic attraction and for whom he possessed such a deep affection and whose most promising life he had helped forward on the path of evolution, was the future Dev Atma who would one day discover True *Dharma* for all mankind and reveal to the world that unique philosophy and that unique system of religion, which alone would be the ship of safety and peace for all fit souls in this storm-tossed ocean of life. It is true he lived too short a life. It is true that he could keep Bhagwan under his most elevating and fostering care only for a few short years. But he performed a function which has immortalised him in the history of the Dev Samaj and which would earn him the deepest gratitude from the future humanity that would be drawn to worship this Spiritual Sun, the Bhagwan Dev Atma.

VII

THE ELEVATING INFLUENCES OF HIS "GURU."

Bhagwan came to Roorkee in the month of November 1866 when he was about sixteen years of age. During this period he had evolved several higher forces of the love for goodness and hatred for evil. Akbarpore provided no environments for his further evolution. He had, therefore, in accordance with the secret working of the grand process of Evolution in Nature, to step out and seek more suitable conditions. His own awakened love for education helped him to come to Roorkee even against heavy odds. And it seems that his advent into Roorkee had far higher promise in its hold for him than the mere prospect of college education. The Nature, as if, had determined Bhagwan's association with his future *Guruji* as the essential object of his coming over to Roorkee. And at the opportune moment this momentous event came to pass by no human design but by Nature's own secret working. Both had the occasion of coming to one and the same place, and at one and the same time and on one and the same day. Unknown to each other and un-introduced by any human being, they felt very strong, most sacred and highly sweet psychic attraction for each other. This developed a strong desire in both to meet each other and grow closer intimacy. This struck both as singular and strange. Bhagwan at least had never before felt such a wonderful higher attraction for any other living man.

This mutual attraction was one essential factor for the further growth of Bhagwan's inner higher life. Without this sacred attachment neither would it have been possible for Bhagwan to unite his heart with his *Guruji* and thereby assimilate the higher influences emanating from his soul, nor would his *Guruji* have tried so hard to minister to Bhagwan's soul welfare.

Hence we can safely assert that these favourable conditions had been brought about according to the Nature's eternal process or Law of Evolution which blossomed mutual higher psychic attraction in the hearts of both, in order to help forward the unique cause of the life of that unique child, whom it had, as if, intended to rise from the east as the spiritual sun of this planet.

It was this higher love which in this youth of hardly seventeen years, brought about a strange revolution. He was then a student. Though he had very hard work of his college to put in yet he snatched some moments to pass at the feet of his *Guruji*. It was during these days that Rishiji gave a copy of the *Bhagwad Gita* to Bhagwan. This was in Urdu. It was translated from Persian by the distinguished Vedantist Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. He

had added his own notes and comments. Bhagwan began to read it eagerly. The subjects dealt with in that book were quite new to Bhagwan. The study of the preface and the notes of that book gave Bhagwan a conviction that the feeling for his soul welfare which ruled his heart and kept it above the reach of lower desires, was in fact nothing but a thirst for *Brahm Gyan* (i.e., knowledge of *Brahm*) and *Brahm Anand* (i.e., Realisation of highest happiness in *Brahm*). So he determined to make all kinds of sacrifices and to undergo all forms of religious exercises to attain that goal of *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand*. In this sacred resolve he was materially helped by the teachings, association, religious exercise and the example of the daily noble life of his *Guruji*.

All this change took place in Bhagwan's life before he was eighteen years of age and before he had sought initiation as a disciple. The vision of his goal which fascinated his heart immensely and the prospect of attaining that by the help of his *Guruji* had deepened the ties of devotion still more, which bound his child soul with the soul of his *Guruji*. Hence he could not bear to live away from him.

Consequently when after passing the lower subordinate examination, he was posted at Kosi (District Mathura) away from Roorkee, he naturally felt very miserable. Money and worldly emoluments were not the object of his life. His noble heart had always yearned for the welfare of soul above all other things. The food and drink of his soul consisted of quest after the supreme goal of *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand*. And the only noble personality whom he believed and loved as the safe guide to that goal lived not at Kosi but at Roorkee. Hence Kosi appeared desolate to him. On several occasions this separation from his *Guru* so strongly moved him that he would burst into tears. At last after anxious waiting, earnest prayers and other religious exercises for getting at the feet of his *Guru* again, favourable conditions came about. A vacancy occurred in the College at Roorkee. Bhagwan at once applied for it. His happiness knew no bounds when he got the order for his transfer, though he was leaving a post carrying Rs. 65 a month as pay and allowance for that carrying Rs. 40 per mensem only. This was in itself singular and illustrative of the fact how Bhagwan was prepared to make any sacrifice for realising his higher goal of life.

After his transfer to Roorkee Bhagwan remained in the company of his most beloved *Guruji* for over two years and a quarter. During this period Bhagwan's soul underwent great many changes for higher evolution. These were briefly as under :—

1. "BRAHM" AND "MAYA."

Association with his *Guruji* strengthened the newly awakened desire in Bhagwan to have *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand* till it became the one absorbing goal of his life. Before coming in contact with his *Guruji*, Bhagwan's heart yearned for some indefinable higher thing as distinguished from the lower desires which long for the things

VII

THE ELEVATING INFLUENCES OF HIS "GURU."

Bhagwan came to Roorkee in the month of November 1866 when he was about sixteen years of age. During this period he had evolved several higher forces of the love for goodness and hatred for evil. Akbarpore provided no environments for his further evolution. He had, therefore, in accordance with the secret working of the grand process of Evolution in Nature, to step out and seek more suitable conditions. His own awakened love for education helped him to come to Roorkee even against heavy odds. And it seems that his advent into Roorkee had far higher promise in its hold for him than the mere prospect of college education. The Nature, as if, had determined Bhagwan's association with his future *Guruji* as the essential object of his coming over to Roorkee. And at the opportune moment this momentous event came to pass by no human design but by Nature's own secret working. Both had the occasion of coming to one and the same place, and at one and the same time and on one and the same day. Unknown to each other and un-introduced by any human being, they felt very strong, most sacred and highly sweet psychic attraction for each other. This developed a strong desire in both to meet each other and grow closer intimacy. This struck both as singular and strange. Bhagwan at least had never before felt such a wonderful higher attraction for any other living man.

This mutual attraction was one essential factor for the further growth of Bhagwan's inner higher life. Without this sacred attachment neither would it have been possible for Bhagwan to unite his heart with his *Guruji* and thereby assimilate the higher influences emanating from his soul, nor would his *Guruji* have tried so hard to minister to Bhagwan's soul welfare.

Hence we can safely assert that these favourable conditions had been brought about according to the Nature's eternal process or Law of Evolution which blossomed mutual higher psychic attraction in the hearts of both, in order to help forward the unique cause of the life of that unique child, whom it had, as if, intended to rise from the east as the spiritual sun of this planet.

It was this higher love which in this youth of hardly seventeen years, brought about a strange revolution. He was then a student. Though he had very hard work of his college to put in yet he snatched some moments to pass at the feet of his *Guruji*. It was during these days that Rishiji gave a copy of the *Bhagwad Gita* to Bhagwan. This was in Urdu. It was translated from Persian by the distinguished Vedantist Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. He

had added his own notes and comments. Bhagwan began to read it eagerly. The subjects dealt with in that book were quite new to Bhagwan. The study of the preface and the notes of that book gave Bhagwan a conviction that the feeling for his soul welfare which ruled his heart and kept it above the reach of lower desires, was in fact nothing but a thirst for *Brahm Gyan* (i.e., knowledge of *Brahm*) and *Brahm Anand* (i.e., Realisation of highest happiness in *Brahm*). So he determined to make all kinds of sacrifices and to undergo all forms of religious exercises to attain that goal of *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand*. In this sacred resolve he was materially helped by the teachings, association, religious exercise and the example of the daily noble life of his *Guruji*.

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1. "BRAHM" AND "MAYA."

Association with his *Guruji* strengthened the newly awakened desire in Bhagwan to have *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand* till it became the one absorbing goal of his life. Before coming in contact with his *Guruji*, Bhagwan's heart yearned for some indefinable higher thing as distinguished from the lower desires which long for the things

of earth. But he could not define what that yearning was for. *Guruji's* teachings led him to think that that something was the realisation of *Brahm* which he could attain to only if he detached himself from all worldly bondages which constituted *Maya*. He also believed then that this supreme knowledge and realisation was the one remedy to save man from the entanglements of the cycle of births and deaths. He believed the attainment of that goal as the one highest quest and one supreme object of the life of every human soul.

2. "VERAGYA" OR RENUNCIATION.

Bhagwan's *Guruji Maharaj* neither taught nor practised that kind of renunciation which is said to consist in the abandonment of all domestic ties and responsibilities and undergoing mortification of flesh by fasts, etc. *Rishiji* himself lived a married life. He had wife and children and he had under his protection several other near relations. He maintained himself and all those who depended on him by his self-earned money. He was a Government servant. He considered it wrong to cut off all domestic and other relations and to live upon the earnings of others, partake of dainty dishes provided by them, use intoxicants, *aimlessly* wander about to the places of pilgrimage, waste all precious time in idleness after casting off the right duties and obligations towards others and thus pass off for a *Sadhu* or *Sannyasi*. He did not consider all this to be true renunciation.

Rishiji taught true renunciation to consist in developing consciousness against and getting freedom from the slavery of all those happiness-based low desires—which enslaved a man to tasteful things, various kinds of intoxicants, wealth and property, name and fame, sexual indulgence, family and children, etc.—and low passions of jealousy and vindictiveness, which besides degenerating his soul also earn for him no end of physical diseases and ills and undue heart shocks. All such undue clings to things and persons held dear by man, not unoften drive him to put an end even to his precious life in the event of his permanent separation from them. The true renunciation, therefore, lay in subduing those lower desires and passions which unduly bind man to things and persons. This was possible only when a man awakened to their dark side and grew repulsion for them. This is the only way to freedom from such a slavery.

This grand conception clearly shows that a man living in the world and keeping home and relations could all the same be a *true Veragi*, while a man devoid of these higher repulsions or hates against low loves and low hates would be a *false Veragi* if he simply gave up his home and connections, put on a yellow dress and baptised himself as a *Sadhu* or *Sannyasi* and wandered all over the world. Nay, such a person would still remain a slave to his low desires, low passions and undue attachments.

This conception of *Veragya* was indeed a true one.

But Rishiji further taught that one should develop an attitude of indifference against all forms of mental shocks, which he is liable to receive when somebody falsely slanders him, grows ungrateful towards him, inflicts any wrong on him or when he feels acutely the need of something which he is unable to get. He must consider them as a play of *Maya*. He should also cherish no desire for any such happiness, as he can derive from the service done to him by others. Thus he must endeavour to consider happiness and misery as one and the same thing. He must view them either as God's will or as unreal and absolutely transient things, and thus keep himself above them. For this purpose *Guruji* wrote the following instructions for Bhagwan in one of his letters :—

"Oh servant of *Brahm*! merge your personality in *Brahm*. Renunciation does not mean abandoning of wife and children. Renunciation means freedom from *Maya*."

"Dear brother! remain ever content in God's will and never complain."

"It does not behove us to boast or assert our will. It is proper to be content with God's will. If not, discontentment would breed only misery and nothing else."

"The chief struggle for a soul is to crush one's ego and harmonise our life with His life."

"So merge yourself in Him that nothing of your ego at all remains."

This second portion of the renunciation which Rishiji taught and by which he demanded that one should consider misery and happiness alike, one should never complain, one should never assert oneself against wrong even in order to remove it, and one should merely develop a feeling of putting up with all that calmly, was not correct. The philosophy of merging ego in *Brahm* too, was incorrect as no *Brahm* exists.

But Bhagwan in that stage of life could not but accept this philosophy of renunciation as *wholly true*. It brought about one very great change in Bhagwan's inner life. It mightily strengthened Bhagwan's growing spirit of true *Veragya*. This contribution to his inner growth was of vast importance in his march on the path of higher life. Bhagwan was quite a youth at that time. In absence of this most powerful force it is likely that some youthful desire or some youthful temptation for money, position, etc., might have interfered and led him away from the path of his unique journey. To keep Bhagwan above the reach of all low desires and all forms of temptations, it was imperative that a very powerful force of renunciation or of repulsion against all forms of slavery to low desires and undue attachments to things and persons should awaken and rule his heart. By the silent secret but sure working of the Law of Evolution in Nature which had brought about the manifestation of Bhagwan, it was but necessary that such influences should enter the life of Bhagwan as might mould him to the

highest degree of *Veragya*. Those influences came to him from the person of his *Guruji Maharaj*. We cannot help expressing our deepest gratitude to Rishiji for all this blessed and unique help to the Saviour of Humanity and of us all.

The evolution of this force of true renunciation kept Bhagwan above all low attachments to wife, children, wealth, property, name and fame, power, position, palate, bodily enjoyments, etc. It produced in him strong repulsion against every form of gain or possession which threatened to stand in the way of his soul welfare. The one goal which *completely* possessed his soul was the *Brahm Gyan* and *Brahm Anand*.

Detachment to every form of low desire and complete freedom from jealousy, revenge, etc., left Bhagwan's heart free to busy itself in the study of and contemplation over all such matters as pertained to soul. He found intense satisfaction in studying, thinking over, discoursing upon and debating on all such subjects which had direct reference to his soul. He considered this form of happiness as the supreme happiness.

This marked the growth of the elementary stage of soul consciousness or *Atam Bodh* in him.

The awakening of this soul consciousness (however elementary) made him a devoted student of *Bhagwad Gita Yoga Vashisht* and some other books composed by Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. Besides this he contemplated over the beauties in the character of his *Guru* in order to assimilate their influences. In leisure time he kept repeating the *mantra* taught to him by Rishiji.

As Bhagwan's noble consort was also his co-disciple, he not only read to her the literature he deemed precious for himself but began teaching her Urdu in order to enable her to herself study the Urdu literature on the subject of soul. Both talked on soul subjects for each other's welfare and thus proved true co-travellers on the path of higher life.

As a Government servant Bhagwan had to attend to his duties and to discharge them faithfully. But over and above the time that he was busy in college, he spent all his other available time in various religious exercises and higher thought. Even during the college hour if he had a free period, he spent it in the same higher pursuit. He sought company of none, nay, tried to remain as aloof from the association of others as he could. He saw that besides his own dear *Guruji* and his noble wife there was none who could find any interest, beyond the sensual matters, in subjects touching and concerning soul-knowledge and soul-welfare and the joys of higher life and higher thought. As a person addicted to drinking, or taking opium or *bhang* very naturally seeks the society of the lovers of one or all of these poisons, finds himself in element amongst them, grows eloquent with them on the so-called benefits of these poisons and goes into raptures when others sing any song in their praise, while he definitely avoids association with those

hostile to his beloved intoxicants; in the same way Bhagwan who had developed deep love for matters relating to the knowledge and welfare of soul avoided the company of all those who were devoid of any consciousness about the good of soul, and with whom he could not talk on soul matters so dear to his heart, and thus could find no higher joy in their company. Bhagwan, therefore, felt no attraction for such souls. And save as a matter of necessity he did not even associate with them.

3. EGO OR SELF OR "I."

Rishiji taught Bhagwan to come out of the control of "Ego." The appeal all along made by him was on the basis of Vedantic teachings which taught, like other wrong philosophies of the world, avoidance of pain and attainment of happiness as the supreme goal of life. The sermon on this subject which Rishiji gave to Bhagwan was as under:—

"One should level Ego to dust. Man should never cherish a feeling that it would have been better if he had been possessed of this or that thing or if he could come out of this or that disease. One should learn to remain ever content with God's will."

"The chief religious exercise for man is to kill Ego and merge one's will in God's will."

"If anybody abuses you or calls you names, calmly listen (without pain). But if you feel pain dismiss the man by saying, "May God bless you."

This meant that man should ordinarily take no defensive measures against any injury done to him or any loss inflicted upon him by others, but learn to receive all that as God's will and bear and forbear it, and hence accept it with equanimity of heart. If Ego revolts at all this, it should be crushed, nay, it should be levelled to absolute clay of earth, shorn of all sensitiveness.

These teachings were not right. Hence Bhagwan's soul could not accept them. To make life utterly insensitive to undue assault and injury was absolutely foreign to Bhagwan's inner soul which was struggling to develop more and more the higher forces and higher consciousnesses in his soul. Bhagwan, therefore, never took any trouble to apprise himself of the list of God's will which it was necessary for man to fulfil in various relations. Bhagwan was not told how this list of what constituted God's will, could be had, and what criterion there was to decide whether any particular act was in accord with the God's will or not.

But though this form of teachings could not influence Bhagwan in spite of his intense love for Rishiji, it all the same, made it easy and necessary for him to assimilate and make the very texture of his being, any such repulsion for any evil as was possessed by Rishiji and any such higher or altruistic force as had grown in his noble soul. Hence briefly:—

1. Bhagwan *imbibed* from his *Guruji* who possessed it, the

hatred against speaking untruth even though it was calculated to gain for him any worldly thing or help him to avoid any worldly loss.

2. Bhagwan *imbibed strong hatred against adultery* from Rishiji who himself possessed intense repulsion for it.

3. Bhagwan *imbibed from Rishiji strong hatred against dishonesty* and all unfair practices in order to gain wealth, since he (Rishiji) possessed that feeling in his soul.

4. Bhagwan *awakened in his soul feeling for being true to all right promises* or engagements because Rishiji himself possessed that feeling.

5. Rishiji possessed strong feeling of mercy which materially *strengthened Bhagwan's own feeling of mercy*.

6. Rishiji possessed strong feeling of sense of duty which *strengthened Bhagwan's own sense of duty*.

7. Rishiji possessed a true feeling of sympathy which led him to minister to the needs or wants of others. This noble feeling *strengthened Bhagwan's feeling of sympathy*.

8. Rishiji possessed strong sense of discipline. This *fostered Bhagwan's own awakened sense of discipline*.

9. Rishiji possessed the feeling of gratitude in relation to his benefactors. This noble force *strengthened Bhagwan's awakened feeling of gratitude*.

10. Rishiji possessed a very strong force of having daily, in a secluded place, his *Sadhan* or religious exercise which consisted of reading some scripture, contemplation, *jap*, prayer, etc. This *strengthened Bhagwan's feeling for similar religious exercises*.

All these invaluable feelings which were awakened or fostered in Bhagwan through Rishiji's company were a mighty treasure of the soul to him and they were immensely useful in his further evolution. But the key which opened all this treasure for him was his unshakable feeling of reverence and love for his *Guruji*, without which it would never have been possible for him to gain all that. Such is the Nature's Law in matters of the soul.

VIII

INFLUENCE OF MUNSHI KANHYALAL ALAKHDHARI.

It has been mentioned that, when Bhagwan was attracted by his future *Guruji's* personality, and he commenced receiving his influences, the latter gave him a copy of *Bhagwad Gita* by Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. As the feelings for his soul-welfare grew deeper and fuller, Bhagwan found highest joy in the study of such literature, as shed any light on the problem of soul. The books, that appealed to him most, were those that were from the pen of the self-same Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. Bhagwan never forgot to the last, the debt of gratitude he owed to Munshiji.

WHO WAS ALAKHDHARI?

Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari was well known in his own time as a distinguished Vedantist. He was one of the four sons of Dewan Dharamdas of Agra. His father was a very wealthy and leading person at Agra. Kanhyalal was born with some remarkable hereditary powers. He came of the Vaish caste. He did not know English. But he was a great scholar of Persian. He was a great thinker and a man of independent views. He openly preached everything which he believed to be true, little caring if that was antagonistic to prevalent religious books or orthodox opinions of Pandits or Brahmans. No frown of the nearest and the dearest and no prospect of favour deterred him from openly avowing his beliefs and opinions. He could never demean himself by having recourse to any subterfuge or lie in order to be in the good books of others.

He possessed exceptional and intense feelings for matters that pertained to religion and philosophy. He was well versed in the philosophies of the well-known religious systems. He was a great student. He loved to write original literature or translate good books. He was above all prejudices regarding food and caste. He led a fierce warfare against Brahmanic teachings and superstitions such as, efficacy of *darshan* of any idol at any place of pilgrimage, or of any bath in any so-called sacred river, tank, pond, lake, etc., fasting. *Shradh* or offerings made for the dead to Brahmans, worship of gods and goddesses or listening to any stories relating to them, etc. He himself practised none of the above things.

He was strictly an honest man. Besides serving as *Sirishtedar* and Tahsildar, he was also for some time Superintendent in Malerkotla State. His father is said to have left about half a million rupees worth property. But Alakhdhari is said to have taken no patrimony and left his claim in favour of his brothers. He was above every kind of greed and attachment to money or property. He loved cleanliness. He shaved his beard and moustache and even eyebrows and took his meals on dining table even in those days.

His wife, on the contrary, was a completely orthodox lady. They had no issue.

Munshi Kanhyalal renounced all other religious faiths but finding Vedantism more suited to his stage of growth clung to it. The *Gita* translated by him into Urdu was his first book that Bhagwan was given by his *Guruji*. It was written on Vedantism and contained several foot-notes which helped Bhagwan in developing hatred for several Brahmanical superstitions. To the last he remembered the author with a feeling of gratitude.

In course of time Bhagwan came to realise the falsehood and absurdity of Vedantic creed. Out of sheer gratitude he tried to reclaim Munshi Kanhyalalji from that erroneous path. But Alakhdhariji returned a reply that he was too old to change. No lover of true knowledge can ever be too old to change his views. It is only a victim of blind faith who can say so. A man conscious of physical dangers cannot shut his eyes to a danger even when he is on death-bed. He would not, if he possesses normal senses, take shelter behind the excuse that he is too old to save his life. In fact Munshi Kanhyalal, though above prevalent false faiths, was not after all a seeker of truth and he had not basked in the sunshine of true religion or else he would have accepted Bhagwan's suggestion to examine his beliefs specially, when Bhagwan offered to shed new light on them.

Alakhdhariji had really no knowledge about his self. He at one place wrote :—

"I cannot prove who I am—or what I am doing—or what consequences would accrue from my deeds—or what body is and what soul is and who and where that Being is who awakens activity and life in them, who joins and separates both of them?—To prove all this is beyond me when I am even quite ignorant of my very existence."

Now how can a man be called *Atam Gyani* (one possessed of the knowledge of soul) who neither knows who he is, nor what his body is, nor what his soul is, nor who moves his body, nor what his deeds are, nor what the natural and necessary fruits of his actions are? If the Vedantic creed was incompetent to give him knowledge of these fundamental points, what a spiritual tragedy it was that he should have pinned his faith on that as a system of religion? Can we not reasonably presume that his faith in Vedant was no better than a blind faith, on a par with those who believe in multi-million gods and goddesses and who are entangled in the cobweb of superstitions?

It is strange how his belief based on blind faith absolutely captivated his heart. For at one place he wrote :—

"The relation of this faqir (*i.e.*, myself) to Vedant is of the same nature as the relation of the hungry to food or the lover for his beloved."

"Though some may consider my faith wrong through and

through, my condition is like Majnu who cries for Laila (his beloved—Ed.) and Mansur who cries *An-ul-Haq*."

Such a devotion was worthy of some better cause and a truer philosophy. But this good man lost his heart for this false philosophy, and, like million others who live and die in false faiths, wanted to live and die in it. To the last this blind faith kept its vice-like grip on him.

But though, in absence of the light of true *Dharm*, he could not but cling to a false system, it cannot be denied that he was a good man of his time—honest, faithful, loyal, above all forms of hypocrisy, above all low attachments to wealth, property, etc., and far beyond his compeers in life. The influence of such a personality was to that extent good for those who either read his books or came in contact with him. Such a soul was a star of resplendent value in his own sphere.

WHY IS VEDANT PHILOSOPHY FALSE ?

The Vedantic faith in Kanhyalal's own language and which is the language of almost every Vedantist, is

"That when *Maya* or ignorance spread over *Brahm* (or joined with *Brahm*) *Jiv Atma* was produced. This *Jiv Atma* (or so-called individual soul) becomes God himself by dint of obtaining the knowledge of his *own self*. By enlightenment nothing remains but one *Brahm* who in fact was and is the only true Being."

Now this *Maya* and *Brahm*—both of them—are creations of human fancy or imagination. *Brahm* is said to be pervading all non-living and living beings. And yet *Brahm* in the body of Kanhyalal realised himself the enlightened one, while in the body of Kanhyalal's wife the same *Brahm* was quite ignorant of that self. Both these positions are opposed to fundamental principles of Logic. A thing cannot both be and not be at one and the same time. The same being cannot both be enlightened and unenlightened, chaste and unchaste, honest and dishonest, etc., at one and the same time. Huge contradictions prevail in actions of millions of human beings. If they all are one and the same *Brahm*, all these contradictions can never come to pass. A man cannot be both colour and light-blind and yet full of sight; cannot both be stone deaf and able to hear; cannot both be absolutely dumb and yet full of power of speech. Both the principles of identity and non-contradictions—observance whereof leads us unto light and truth—are ruthlessly trampled upon by this false philosophy.

An enlightened Vedantist like Munshi Kanhyalal could not have openly confessed his blank ignorance of the very knowledge about himself, if the Vedantism had had any light to show what the soul is. To fill soul with light, to lift all clouds of darkness hanging over it for centuries and to lay open to the spiritual eye the nature and organism of soul, the causes of its evolution and dissolution, the laws of its liberation from dissolution and laws of

its higher evolution, and its supreme goal, was reserved for Bhagwan Dev Atma without whose light the entire humanity could not but grope in darkness.

Vedantism being fundamentally a false system of religion is also very dangerous. It keeps a man steeped in darkness about the distinction in good and bad deeds; for Vedantism teaches that *Brahm Gyan* should be above this discrimination and quite blank as regards all sense of good and bad. Nay, it teaches that *Brahm Gyani* is not affected at all by any deeds—good or bad, and harvests no fruit thereof. But the fact is that the fruit of every deed is recorded at once in the change brought about in the very life organism of man. It is produced as a matter of course. Once you allow any set of forces to interact, nobody on earth or heaven can stop the result born of their natural activity to come into being. This belief is therefore a mere fancy. The Vedant teaches

“That a man who wishes for no fruit of his deeds remains free from all such fruits, even if he does any deed.....As fire consumes everything, in the same way knowledge of *Brahm* consumes all good and bad deeds.”

This teaching had one inevitable result that it helped a general man inclined as he is to evil, to slip still lower without a let or hindrance. It is such teachings which produced disbelief in matters of soul and led to the growth of that dangerous cult which is termed *Vam Marg*. The *Vam Marg* raised destructive sensual pleasures to the stage of worship. Its followers partook of flesh, drink, etc., and even committed adultery and various other sins as a way to salvation.

Vedant also produced a rich crop of idle, slothful and selfish *Sadhus* and *Sanyasis* in our country who number now nearly 75 lacs, and who do no useful service to any section of their fellow human beings, but burden them with the cost of their food and drink, raiment and even intoxicants. In several cases they destroy the homes which nourish them, bite the hand that feeds them and thus even when doing evil deeds feel themselves to be unaffected by them.

Our land bears the ghastly wounds on its very face as the manifest and natural results of this false and highly dangerous philosophy.

IX

EUROPEAN CHARACTER.

During his stay at Roorkee, Bhagwan came in contact with Europeans. He had ample opportunities of observing their ways of life and their daily behaviour. He witnessed *some* traits of higher Character in them, which deeply affected him on account of his innate love of goodness and he developed a feeling of true respect for them. This feeling of respect for their character grew in Bhagwan's life with time. Up to the last he retained a very high regard for what constitutes European character. Some of the virtues in them which touched his heart at Roorkee are as under :—

1. *Sense of Duty*.—Bhagwan saw that several Europeans possessed a high sense of duty which impelled them to do the work entrusted to them most faithfully, honestly and diligently. It led them to face bravely any difficulty, obstruction or personal inconvenience which the performance of their duty entailed, and let no personal consideration of rest or recreation stand in the way. They thus proved themselves completely trustworthy. This valuable and absolutely necessary sense, Bhagwan found almost absent in his country-men.

2. *Sense of Regularity*.—Bhagwan saw that several Europeans regulated their life according to some fixed programme and did not let it drift at the mercy of waves of time or circumstances. This sense of regularity, this virtue of leading life according to some fixed programme, Bhagwan found almost absent in his countrymen around him. Bhagwan's own unique life however was wonderfully regulated even then.

3. *Sense of Punctuality or regard for time engagements*.—Bhagwan saw that as a rule Europeans always tried to be in time when they had to see anybody or attend any public meeting. As a rule they were punctual to a minute. This valuable sense Bhagwan found absent in his countrymen. Even to-day some of the best and well-known Indian leaders feel no derogation in proving untrue to their time engagements. It is very rarely that they come to a meeting in time. And the wonder is that they do not feel that they have committed any serious wrong. They almost never express any regret for this violation of time engagement which proves them false.

4. *Sense of Discipline and Obedience to Authority*.—Bhagwan saw with admiration that almost all Europeans allowed none of their own inclinations or self will to interfere, when they were ordered by their superior officers, under whom they were placed, to do any piece of work in a particular way. They tried their level best to obey the instructions to the letter and merged their will in

the will of the officer under whom they were placed. By this glorious trait of their character they proved themselves completely trustworthy. Bhagwan saw this trait almost absent in the character of his countrymen.

Besides these great virtues which deeply impressed Bhagwan's heart, there were other traits too which he witnessed in their lives and which evoked feeling of admiration in him for European character. These were the senses of beauty, cleanliness, order, smart-ness, etc.

Says Bhagwan in his Autobiography :—

“ I observed these virtues in European character when I was twenty-three years of age. But as I grew in years and my sphere of knowledge widened and several higher forces blossomed in my heart, I observed several other higher traits of character in them which I would not mention at this stage.” (Vol. II, p. 176.)

We shall speak of them in their proper place.

SUPREME IDEAL

BY THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote scores of letters to his most revered father during his stay at Roorkee. It is very fortunate that his revered father possessed a feeling for very neatly preserving all those letters received from his unique son with the date of receipt marked on everyone of them. Bhagwan was not aware of this fact. However after his revered father left this earth, Bhagwan found all these letters, kept well preserved in a satchel, as a treasure among his relics. Bhagwan took them. These letters, written by Bhagwan before the age of twenty-three throw a flood of light upon the stage of evolution that he had reached then under the most elevating influences of his dearly loved *Guruji*. We publish some quotations from these letters with the object of showing the extent of his knowledge about his supreme ideal of life which had awakened in him and the true spirit of *Vairagya* which animated his youthful soul even at that period of life.

1. *Relating to his chief ideal.*—Bhagwan was ill for a long time in the year 1873. His revered father, when apprised of it, wrote to his illustrious son that he should have some religious exercises, *viz.*, recitation or worship, performed for the purpose of regaining health. Bhagwan in reply wrote to his father in the letter, dated the 31st March, 1873 as under :—

“So long we have body we may have physical illness too. I feel no necessity whatsoever for any religious worship or recitation for the purpose of removing my bodily disease. Lover of *Dharma* has to remain above all worldly pains or pleasures.....This body is liable to decay and death. *Higher life alone is the one most essential object for every human soul.*”

2. *Indifference to wealth and property in the performance of religious exercises conducive to the realisation of above supreme ideal.*—When Bhagwan was posted at Kosi (District Muttra) in the year 1868, he had engaged a relation of his as a cook. This wicked man committed a theft of Rs. 123 from the box of Bhagwan. Few days after that, he cooked up some excuse to leave for his native place and consequently gave up his employment under Bhagwan and went away home. Bhagwan's father came to know of the shameful deed of the cook and wrote to his illustrious son, asking the details concerning the theft. Bhagwan wrote in reply on the 13th March, 1868 as under :—

“You wrote to me that the sin committed by the cook has been out there. I myself did not write to you about the theft, because I did not like the man to say that he had come all the way to serve me, while I tarnished his character with this charge. *The loss of*

this amount did not pain me in the least because I have not made myself a slave of the worldly things."

At Kosi Bhagwan did not pass happy because he was away from his beloved *Guruji*, in whose society alone he could find the best environments for his unique soul. He therefore gave up his post carrying Rs. 50 + 15 = 65 per mensem and accepted an appointment at Roorkee College on Rs. 40 per mensem only. This struck his father as something quite inexplicable in a young man of only eighteen years and few months of age who should ordinarily hunger after a big promotion in pay and not enjoy a cut of Rs. 25 every month and also the loss of future prospects. Consequently he wrote to his illustrious son to enquire of him about this strange behaviour of his. In a letter dated the 14th August, 1869 Bhagwan wrote from Roorkee as under :—

"I do not at all consider wealth and property of this world or the material comforts and things as the end and aim of my life. My supreme goal is Higher or Dharmic life. I preferred the post of a teacher on Rs. 40 in the Roorkee College to a post at Kosi carrying Rs. 65 per mensem, because here I shall be able to live under the most elevating influences of my revered benefactor (i.e., Guruji). On reaching this place I have been living in the society of my Guru and have been passing very happy."

3. *Indifference to fame and name.*—Not only did Bhagwan's revered father but many of his relations also view the strange behaviour of Bhagwan as unusual. His revered father once wrote to Bhagwan that his kinsmen did not like his strange ways. Bhagwan wrote in reply in a letter dated the 13th November, 1869 as under :—

"You know that even while living in the world, I prefer the life of a faqir. One of the necessary disciplines of such a life is that one must keep himself above and unaffected by the praise and blame of the world."

4. *Indifference to the considerations of pain and pleasure or misery and happiness.*—In one of his letters dated the 18th November, 1872, Bhagwan while writing upon the same subject (that of sub-para 3 above) said as under :—

"When others do not see me as I am, or misunderstand and misrepresent me I do receive a very severe shock such as I can hardly describe in words. But I try to console myself and calmly swallow this bitter pill, with the thought that from the world, constituted as it is, nothing better could be expected. A lover of higher life should as far as possible be above all the considerations of pain and pleasure or misery and happiness. It is a necessary discipline for a lover of higher life to patiently bear all the difficulties and calamities which meet him in the path of higher life."

5. *Being above the terror of death.*—Bhagwan lost his first born son. His father informed him of the sad event as it happened at Akbarpur. Bhagwan wrote to his father in reply as under in his letter dated January 1871 :—

"I have come to know from your letter of the premature demise of my child. . Sooner or later all of us have to pass away. It is useless to feel miserable with regard to what is inevitable. You and dear mother must have been shocked by this painful event. But it behoves you all to bear it patiently. I hope you will control yourself and console dear mother."

These very few samples of the letters, written by him between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three shed a glorious light upon Bhagwan's inner life. A boy of eighteen is hardly expected to give up chances of wealth and prospects with the sole object of attaining higher life. A young man of hardly twenty or twenty-one is not expected to turn his back on all those worldly ambitions which are the very breath for normal man's life. In fact Bhagwan had rejected the road which is a royal road for the world and had his eyes set on untrodden narrow path which was quite new and which made his behaviour a mystery to those around him. The fact worth noting is that to start with he had no advice or encouragement from anybody to tread this new path. He sought out his *Guru*. His own heart yearned to associate with him. His heart in his own inner light lost all charm for money and future prospects at Kosi and compelled him to rush to Roorkee to willingly accept definite loss of Rs. 25 a month. His father and all others did not approve of his ways. But like a needle he was drawn to his magnet against all the opinions of the world, against all the considerations of personal loss or inconvenience and in fact against all the obstacles that stood in his way. What a splendid asset is all this for a traveler on the unique path.

XI

EDUCATION AT ROORKEE.

As a student Bhagwan shone brilliantly. He passed his first year test with credit. When the second session was over, Bhagwan appeared for the final test of his grade. He passed it with *great credit*. He topped the list of all the successful students in Civil Engineering and won a special prize. The following certificate which we publish here and which was awarded to him, would speak for itself :—

“ THOMSON COLLEGE OF CIVIL ENGINEERING.

Certified that Sheo Narain is qualified for the grade of first-class Sub-Overseer and Sub-Surveyor in the Public Works Department, having passed the examination with *great credit*.

ROORKEE :
31st, August 1868. }

(Sd.) J. G. MEDLEY,
Major R. E.
Principal.

QUALIFICATIONS.

			Full marks.	Marks scored
Mathematics	...	...	475	275
Civil Engineering	...	...	425	355
Surveying	...	...	225	190
Drawing	...	...	275	224
Languages	...	...	150	117
Experimental Science	...	...	50	24
			1600	1185

College prize for Civil Engineering.

Passed second of his Term.”

Bhagwan Dev Atma was the youngest student in his college and majority of his class-mates and others were much senior to him in years. And yet he not only won the good opinion of his teachers as well as of his fellow students but achieved a brilliant success.

But he was not satisfied with all this success. The subjects for the Sub-Overseer and the Overseer Examinations were the same, the only difference being, that for the former they were taught in Vernacular and for the latter in English. So an additional qualification of English language could open the way to the Overseer grade. Bhagwan took to learning English. And within a short period he attained that degree of mastery in that language which could be acquired by others in years. He then requested the Principal to

examine him in that language. He was declared successful and hence was awarded the certificate of an Overseer.

He also began to learn Sanskrit. He took tuition with a Pandit in order to be conversant with that difficult language too. He did not learn languages for the sake of money. He learnt them with the object of developing his capacity and widening the scope of his learning.

Hence up to the time he left Roorkee, besides Urdu and Hindi, he had learned English, Sanskrit, etc , and had thus opened wide for himself the doors of knowledge which would otherwise have remained sealed, and which went most substantially to widen the sphere of his knowledge and experience.

XII

A "SANYASI" AND HIS INFLUENCE.

Guruji's death left a great void in the heart of Bhagwan. He felt Roorkee a dull dreary desert which formerly used to be the place of the highest fascination for him. He passed gloomy and depressed. He felt a sense of loneliness oppressing him. Besides his illustrious wife, there were only two other souls in Roorkee with whom he could talk about Vedant and *Veragya* and thus satisfy his hunger. One of these two was a Hindu who possessed very great respect and reverence for Bhagwan's *Guruji Maharaj*, as the latter had saved him from being a convert to Islam under the influences of a Muslim *Maulvi*. The other was a Musalman *Sufi*. On occasions Bhagwan visited them. Besides these two he, as a rule, saw or visited no one.

But during those days a *Sanyasi* came to Roorkee. He was putting up in a house provided to him for his stay by a gentleman. He lived there all alone. He was studying *Panch Dashi*—a Vedantic scripture—under a Pandit. Bhagwan used to learn Sanskrit from the same Pandit. It was by a strange combination of circumstances that Bhagwan one day met this *Sanyasi*. Bhagwan had, as a rule, no regard for the so-called *Sadhus* and *Sanyasis* who had abandoned their home ties and cast off all sacred duties and responsibilities and thus bade farewell to the life of useful action. But even a chance association with this *Sanyasi* attracted Bhagwan towards him. The *Sanyasi's* good life affected Bhagwan and he felt respect and reverence for him. The *Sanyasi* too was sensibly affected by Bhagwan's noble life and felt respect for him. This mutual regard drew them closer and closer. Bhagwan used to visit him, as a rule, at 9 p. m. all alone after attending to all his official duties. The *Sadhu*, as was his wont, used to be in an attitude of contemplation at that time. But when Bhagwan entered his house he used to open his eyes and engage in conversation with him. The topic of conversation was Vedantic philosophy—a subject dear to both.

This *Sanyasi* was originally a Kashmiri Brahman. He was a good scholar of Persian. He knew Hindi and something of Sanskrit. He was a government servant before he embraced *Sanyas*. He was a Reader or *Sarishtedar* to the Deputy Commissioner of a district in Oudh. He was known there for his strict honesty and probity. He was even then fond of associating with *Sadhus*. He was a constant reader of *Gita* and possessed very deep love for Sri Krishna—the God Incarnate of Hindus. The very name of Krishna was so dear to his heart that once while recording the statement of a woman witness when he heard the name of Krishna let fall from her mouth ; he was so perceptibly moved that tears trickled down his cheeks. His heart had grown detached from all worldly gains and things. The one

quest of his longing heart was to have knowledge and realisation of *Brahm*. He therefore felt every now and then a strong impulse to give up his appointment and take to the life of a *Sanyasi*. The one bar that stood in his way was the consideration for his aged mother who had no other means of sustenance. He was her only son and the only support. But as soon as his mother passed away, he gave up his government job, bade farewell to home and embraced the life of a *Sanyasi*. He was not married and had therefore no wife and children to look after. His new name was Swami Brahma Anand.

All this information about his antecedents, Bhagwan came to hear from *Sanyasi's* own lips during the night talks.

Swami Brahma Anand was not a fraud. He had an absolute faith in his creed and he regulated his daily life strictly according to the tenets and practices of his faith. He wished to give lessons to Bhagwan in a small Vedantic text called *Tatwa Bodh*, composed by Sri Shankaracharya. Bhagwan copied that from a manuscript which was in the possession of the Pandit who taught Sanskrit to Bhagwan. The hand-written copy made in the year 1873 which he regularly read with the Swami can still be found among the records of Bhagwan.

One day Bhagwan invited the Swami to a dinner in his own house. It was with extreme hesitation and reluctance that the Swami agreed to the proposal and accepted the invitation. For that act was opposed to the ordinary rules of the conduct of a *Sanyasi*. But Bhagwan's life and his regard for Swami persuaded the latter to make a new departure.

After some time the Swami expressed his intention of leaving Roorkee. Bhagwan very naturally enquired of his future whereabouts so that he may find time to visit him there. But the Swami definitely declined to give him any information about his future movements as, he said, it was opposed to his creed. "As a *Sanyasi*," said the Swami, "I do not want to establish any kind of relation with anybody. This is why I am declining to give you any information about where I go. In future too I shall give you no such information. Had it been a proper thing for me to establish relations with anybody, why should I have abandoned my home and blood connections."

As a *Sanyasi* the Swami was correct in what he said and did.

But Bhagwan liked his company. Hence when one day he came to know that the Swami had gone to Hardwar, Bhagwan took a cab and left for Hardwar—a distance of 20 miles from Roorkee. At Hardwar Bhagwan made enquiries about the place where the Swami resided. He succeeded in tracing him to a Hindu temple. The Swami was surprised to see Bhagwan there. But he took no offence. Good natured as he was, he greeted Bhagwan and gave him the benefit of his good society. Thereafter Bhagwan lost all trace of him.

But he never forget that the Swami had given him lessons in *Tatwa Bodh*. Up to the last Bhagwan felt grateful to him. Often

times he remembered him in his daily *Sadhans* and offered good wishes for his soul welfare.

Bhagwan's own unique soul scented virtues in others and assimilated them in himself. But his soul repelled and shook off all such influences as were antagonistic to his love for goodness. Hence though the *Veragya* of the Swami and his love for his ideal attracted Bhagwan, yet the fact of his having abandoned home ties and connections and his duties towards them was disagreeable to Bhagwan's unique love for goodness.

XIII

THE SENSE OF DUTY PROGRESSES.

The sense of duty or faithful discharge of all duties and obligations in various relations prompted by his love of Goodness had sprouted in the heart of Bhagwan at a very early stage of his life even at Akbarpur. At Roorkee this most beautiful trait of life grew stronger. It was the development of this glorious force which made it imperative for him :—

1. To repeatedly remember the various daily duties or obligations that he had to attend to in different relations and *under no circumstances to forget them.*

Forgetfulness and neglect in daily duties and obligations has become a chronic malady among mankind. It is called carelessness in ordinary parlance. A prominent business man says that “the carelessness, inaccuracy, and blundering of employees costs Chicago one million dollars a day.” “The dead letter department of the post office in Washington received in one year seven million articles of undelivered mail. Of these more than eighty thousand bore no address whatever. A great many of them were from business houses.”

2. To perform the duty undertaken *before* the appointed time.

3. To do it *to the best of his ability* and not in a slovenly slipshod manner.

“The dishonest, loose-jointed and half done work is responsible for majority of railroad wrecks, of disasters on land and sea which cost so many lives and cause so much misery.” “Not long since,” says Mr. Marden in one of his inspirational books “it was discovered that a girl had served *twenty years for twenty months* sentence in Albania prison, because of the mistake of a court clerk who wrote ‘years’ instead of ‘months’ in the record of prisoner’s sentence.”

4. To allow no sloth or any other happiness-based desire to interfere with putting forth the best possible efforts in its performance.

Bhagwan could find satisfaction only when he had done his best and finished the work before time. This is how during his student life he did all assigned work best, and thus won the golden opinion of his teachers. When he began government service he followed the same glorious principle of life. Hence his officers liked and honoured him very much. He not only attended to his daily task with all the earnestness born of the sense of duty, but *he made it a rule to obey the right commands of his superiors even though they went against his own inclinations.* Bhagwan was posted first at Kosi when he was only eighteen years of age. He then came

to Roorkee and occupied the post of Assistant Surveying Master for nearly two years and a quarter and then again went out as Overseer to the Sutlej Valley Railway and was posted at Bahawalpur. In all these three places the same sense of duty brought Bhagwan to the notice of his officers as the best subordinate and from time to time they expressed very high opinions about him, some of which we give below:—

1. AGRA CANAL IN THE U. P.

“He has given satisfaction in the performance of his duties.”

MATTURA :	}	(Sd.) F. HOME,
2nd April, 1869.	}	Lt. R. E.,
		Executive Engineer,
		2nd Divn., Agra Canal.

2. THOMSON CIVIL ENGINEERING COLLEGE, ROORKEE.

“He has been very favourably reported on by his superiors. He is a man of considerable ability and great energy and application.

ROORKEE :	}	(Sd.) A. M. LANG,
5th Sept., 1871.	}	Capt. R. E.,
		Principal,
		T. C. E. College.

Extract from the report of the Principal, Thomson Civil Engineering College, Roorkee, for 1872-73:—

PARA 41.

“Sheo Narayan* who succeeded Lala Shambhoo Das, in charge of this class, has exerted himself *con amore* to carry out my wishes in this respect, and to extract the maximum amount of work from his class.”

PARA 78.

“.....and Sheo Narayan, the Surveying Master, have given me entire satisfaction, the latter specially, has shown great zeal and energy (despite failing health) in extracting from these classes an increased amount and variety of surveying as reported in the section of my report treating of the ‘course of study.’”

“I have already given him a certificate expressing my high opinion of his zeal and abilities. Since then he has returned to this college and for the one and a half years.....has kept up his character for intelligence and energy; has continued to improve himself in English and various branches of learning. He has youth, energy and good abilities in his favour and promises to become a man of mark if he continues to improve. I can strongly recommend him to his new superiors.”

ROORKEE :	}	(Sd.) A. M. LANG,
26th Nov. 1873.	}	Major, R. E.,
		Principal,
		T. C. E. College.

*The original name of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

3. WHILE SERVING ON I. V. S. RAILWAY.

"I have always found him an active, energetic and intelligent man and well up to superintending work."

(Sd.) L. H. C. ARMSTRONG,
Executive Engineer,
Bahawalpur Division,
I. V. S. Ry.

8th July, 1872.

Principal Lang had rightly read the life and character of Bhagwan when he prophesied that he would be "a man of mark if he continued to improve." The unique hereditary powers that he possessed were his treasure to start his life and they were progressive in their nature. They possessed a capacity of continuous progress. Hence there never came and there would never come a fullstop to his growth. He passed away at the age of 78 years and few months. Only a few months before his departure he completed the third volume of the third edition of *Dev Shashtra* consisting of about 600 pages and dealing with the most profound subject of the philosophy of man. Every year of his life as he progressed, he brought about corresponding improvement in his society and in his literature. He maintained up to the last his well deserved reputation for possessing phenomenal energy. The key to all this was his irrepressible, untiring and growing love for all that is true and all that is good and full and growing repulsion for all that is false and all that is sinful, evil, criminal, wrong, etc.

The sense of duty that he possessed to such an extraordinary degree was founded on his love for goodness and hatred for evil. As the failure to do his daily duties in various relations meant production of evil, it was impossible for him to fail to attend to them, to do them in a half-hearted way or to fail to do them in time.

Hence not only did his superior officers but all those various persons who had any dealing with him, came to feel that his was a soul which could be trusted and which could never prove false.

What a glorious trait of character. It was the absence of this necessary force in his countrymen which was a source of great pain to him and up to the last he tried hard to awaken this force in the hearts of those who came to his feet to imbibe the highest psychic influences of his unique soul.

XIV

GOODNESS-BASED SENSE OF DISCIPLINE

Bhagwan not only possessed the sense of duty of a very high order but he loved discipline. The sense of duty made it imperative for him to implicitly obey all the right commands of his superiors and let no lower consideration of any kind to interfere with the full and faithful discharge of his duties. It had become impossible for him to allow his own will any chance to interfere with the right will of his officers, as that was bound to breed evil and his love of goodness and hatred for evil would not let him do so.

But as Bhagwan was a very good subordinate he was an equally good disciplinarian as an officer. He saw and felt that evil was bound to result if he let those working under him to neglect their duties or disobey his right commands. Principal Lang (Major) was quite right in his estimation of Bhagwan's character when he wrote in his report that "the latter (*i.e.*, Bhagwan) specially has shown great zeal and energy (despite failing health) in extracting from these classes an increased amount and variety of surveying" and "has exerted himself *con amore* to carry out my wishes in this respect and to extract the maximum amount of work from his class." As he controlled students and extracted maximum work from them, he also kept his subordinates under healthy discipline.

When Bhagwan applied for the post of Head Surveying Master in the Roorkee College, there were two Assistant Surveying Masters in the college who were also candidates for the same post. They had tried their level best to secure it. But in spite of their efforts they failed and Bhagwan was successful in being appointed to the post. When Bhagwan came to Roorkee and took over charge, these disappointed candidates had to serve under him. They had grown bitter against Bhagwan because he had succeeded when they had failed. Their attitude, therefore, was sullen and moody and a resentful feeling rose in them to create difficulties for Bhagwan, in order to bring him into disrepute and thus get him out of the post. Bhagwan saw through all this. His feeling of love of discipline to keep his subordinates in their proper place for the efficient working of the machinery, was offended at this defiant attitude of these two disappointed and revengeful souls. He thought over the whole situation calmly and resolved upon a certain definite line of action which he meant to adopt in their relation. He at once commenced to keep an Order Book. He did not issue oral orders to them but wrote down all his orders in relation to the work of these two subordinates in this book and sent it to them. He got them to sign the Order

Book. This ruled out all the possibility of any attempt being made by these two subordinates to hatch up any lie that no such order was issued to them in case of their failure to attend to any item. In case of their disobedience Bhagwan had thus a written evidence to appeal to the Principal against their behaviour. This plan succeeded wonderfully. After some days these two subordinates senior in age to Bhagwan had to reconcile themselves with their position as subordinates to him and thereafter created no trouble or obstruction in Bhagwan's way.

Bhagwan's reputation as a great disciplinarian and lover of the sense of duty soon grew. Hence when the monthly examination of a class which had acquired notoriety for unfair practices, was to be held, Bhagwan was specially selected to supervise it. The boys too were considerably impressed by Bhagwan's sense of duty and high character. As soon as the class entered the examination hall and the candidates took their respective seats Bhagwan addressed them as thus:—

“On the one hand, I know full well the unfair practices in examination in vague among students and on the other, I am fully prepared to supervise you with all the keenness of the sense of duty in me. If any of you is guilty of any attempt at copying from any other candidate, he shall be expelled from the college on my report and his admission here would thus prove fruitless.” These words coming charged with power from Bhagwan, produced the desired effect and none of the candidates dared to have recourse to any kind or form of unfair practice.

One more incident occurred during this period at Roorkee which taxed Bhagwan's sense of discipline pretty heavily. Besides the civil students there were those who came from the army for training. The class of such students was called “sepoys class.” They appeared in the college admission test from their respective corps and those who passed were sent to the Engineering College for the required training. These people were literate to some extent, but, as was to be expected, majority of them were very rude, rough and uncultured and they foolishly considered such uncivilised behaviour of theirs as a mark of bravery and military courage.

During those days a rule was in force in the college, according to which the first year students were required to carry the instruments of measurement themselves when they had to go out to field for doing survey work. They were provided with no servants or *khalasies*. They had themselves to fix the poles and to do all other preliminary things connected with measurements, themselves. All the students of the college who had to learn the work of surveying had to abide by this rule. But these sepoy class students, who had begun to join the college only lately, considered it derogatory to their position to work, like their fellow civil students and carry the instruments themselves. They therefore showed their utter reluctance to abide by this rule. Bhagwan's predecessor instead of compelling them to abide by this good rule yielded to their unjust

demand and used to provide them with *khalasies* in violation of the rule.

When Bhagwan came to know of this difference in treatment of the civil and the military students, he felt it to be a great wrong that such a beneficial rule should be violated merely in deference to the wishes of the military students. Bhagwan considered this rule as productive of good to the students themselves who could by doing everything with their own hands, get a direct experience of all such things. Bhagwan could never be a party to what he felt to be a wrong course of conduct. Hence when the military students wanted coolies to carry their instruments, Bhagwan declined to give them any. This sudden move took the breath away from the military students. They took this as an insult and rushed to the office of the Principal with a complaint against Bhagwan. But they had been forestalled. Bhagwan had, before taking this step, written to the Principal about this wrong demand on the part of the sepoy students and had requested permission to refuse the services of coolies to the military students. The Principal had agreed with the view of Bhagwan and given him the required permission. Hence the complaint of these military people fell flat and they came back very much disappointed.

They then appealed to Bhagwan to allow them to let their own servants carry the instruments from their respective places to the field and they promised to do all other work there, with their own hands. Bhagwan refused this prayer also as *he never in his life compromised with what he believed to be a wrong*. Bhagwan considered all students alike. Hence if the civil students carried their instruments themselves from their houses, the military students had no right to have any preferential treatment. This is what Bhagwan told the sepoys to their face. This silenced them. And they had to carry their instruments themselves to the field and do every work personally with their own hands. Bhagwan had nothing against them. He simply considered the preferential treatment as unjust, opposed to good discipline and involving breach of a healthy rule.

The military students yielded to the orders of Bhagwan but not with good grace. It seems that the fire of indignation continued to smoulder in their hearts. And one day when an occasion arose it burst into blaze.

A party of these military students was required to go to an out-station along with some parties of the civil students for field-work. They had to take necessary instruments with them. Some of the instruments in the store were old and some were new. In order to avoid any chance of anybody's grumbling Bhagwan arranged these in lots according to the usage prevalent in college, in a line mixing the old and the new ones. The parties were asked to begin taking the instruments in lots from one side and to have them by turns. They accordingly began to take them. As was expected some got comparatively better ones than others. Perchance such instruments

fell to the lot of the military party were comparatively old. On this they assumed a defiant attitude and declined to take the instruments. Bhagwan very gently told them that their refusal was not justifiable and was opposed to discipline. But they stood obdurate and sullen and one of them who was a Daffedar indignantly said, "Sir, we are military people. We are not afraid of killing or being killed." As soon as these words of his were out, Bhagwan replied :— "Do you mean to say that you will kill me—your teacher—merely because I do not accede to your undue and unreasonable demands?" The Daffedar returned, "You may understand what you please." Upon this Bhagwan called the Jamadar of the college and said, "Do not give tents, etc. to these military students. I have to report this Daffedar's conduct to the Principal to-morrow and until his decision I do not permit his party to leave the station."

As it was four in the evening the Principal had left the office for his bungalow.

Principal's name was Major Lang. Besides being the Principal he was also the Commanding Officer of all those military students, officers and professors who were in the college. Bhagwan took the very first opportunity on the next day to report to the Principal about the insolent and threatening attitude of the Daffedar. The Principal called the Daffedar to his office. He asked him as to what he had to say to Bhagwan's complaint. Instead of saying "yes" or "no" to the complaint of Bhagwan he began saying, "Sir, I am an old servant. None before this has made any complaint against me. I hold certificates of various officers and they speak so well of me." He placed the certificates before the Principal who went through them and then remarked, "I hold you are guilty of misbehaviour in relation to your teacher. I take no steps against you this time but mind if I hear anything further against you from your teacher, I shall rusticate you from the college and send you back to your corps." These words of the Principal had the desired effect. Never after that did he or any other military student dare to either grow insolent or to disobey. Thus Bhagwan gave them the salutary training of obeying orders of their teachers and the rules of the college.

SYMPATHY AND MERCY.

1. SAVING A DEBAUCHE FROM HIS EVIL WAYS.

When, at the age of about twenty-two Bhagwan was serving in the Railway Engineering Department as an Overseer, a Brahman served under him in the capacity of a Sub-overseer. This man lead a wicked life. He was of a very bad character. He was a married man, but did not keep his wife with him. She was living hundreds of miles away in the house of her husband's parents and this Brahman kept a woman of loose character in his house as a concubine. The thought of that helpless, neglected, and unhappy wife living a lonely, dreary and miserable life awakened feeling of sympathy for her and deeply troubled Bhagwan's heart. It made him restless. Again the life of infidelity and impurity which the Brahman lived aroused his righteous indignation. Both these forces stirred him deeply to save the man's life and bring about the restoration and union of this wedded but forsaken wife.

Bhagwan tried first to bring that man nearer to him. He therefore at first persuaded him to learn English from him. When he agreed to do so and for some days took lessons from Bhagwan, he was given a copy of Urdu translation of *Gita* from the pen of Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdhari. He read that. This and the noble life of Bhagwan created in him respect for him; and when Bhagwan saw that the man was in a mood to listen to his advice, he sympathetically and tactfully broached the subject of his married life with him. He endeavoured to awaken in him a consciousness against the horrible nature of infidelity and breach of marriage troth, as well as against adultery itself. Bhagwan's influences and teachings worked on the heart of the man. He was changed. He agreed to give up all his connection with the wicked woman and drive her out of his house. He succeeded in that. He sent for his wife and began to live with her. Thus a long separated married couple was restored to mutual love and happy household life. The wife had never seen Bhagwan. She had never appealed to him. Bhagwan too had never seen her. Her callous husband made no appeal to Bhagwan to save him from the life of filth and corruption and restore to him the blessings of a happy domestic life. He was content to live the sin-soiled life. There were others who saw the Brahman leading wicked life. But none was moved by sympathy to help an erring brother and bring back to the neglected, helpless and sorrowing wife her lost domestic life and joy. Bhagwan was not related to any of them. By faith he was a *Vedantist* which cult considers all these things as merely play of *Maya*. But Bhagwan's heart being possessed of the love for goodness and repulsion for evil was above all creeds and needed no direct appeal to move and express

itself. The life of sin affected it deeply and it moved Bhagwan to remove it as far as he could. The sight of a sorrowing, helpless woman roused his sympathy and he could not rest till he had done his all, to remove undue sorrow and undue misery. This was the key to Bhagwan's life. And it is this mighty psychic force which after some years prepared Bhagwan to take a leap into the unknown waters, *i.e.*, of embracing the supreme life-vow of establishing Truth and Goodness in the world and eradicating evil and untruth therefrom and thus bring about the true heaven of higher relations on this planet.

2. A COW SAVED FROM BUTCHER'S KNIFE.

From his very childhood Bhagwan possessed the feeling of mercy of a high order. This feeling grew stronger in him during his stay at Roorkee. It manifested itself in various ways there. We record one instance here to illustrate it.

It was in the year 1873 when one day during summer season Bhagwan Dev Atma on passing through a bazaar, witnessed a cow being auctioned. He stopped there. He was told that a butcher intending to purchase it had come into the field to bid for it. His bid was rising. Bhagwan thought that if he purchased the cow, its life could be saved from the butcher's knife. This was enough to stimulate Bhagwan's mercy. He began bidding for it. At last by offering the highest bid, Bhagwan was successful in purchasing the cow. Bhagwan felt happy at heart and brought the poor cow to his house. He kept the animal with him. He fed and served her for some months. But after that he had to leave Roorkee. Hence he remembered a Pandit who had given Bhagwan some lessons in the Sanskrit language. Bhagwan felt grateful to him. In satisfaction of his feeling of gratitude or indebtedness, he offered the cow as a gift to the Pandit. The Pandit naturally felt willing and happy to have the cow and hence gladly took it to his house.

Feeling, that his father may not misunderstand his motives about this gift, Bhagwan, before giving it away wrote to him as under:—

“I would not give this cow as a gift to the Pandit with the hope of having one in the next birth. My gift is absolutely unselfish (*i.e.*, moved by sense of gratitude alone).”

On account of his strong love for goodness, the world of Bhagwan's joy, satisfaction and activity lay in removing sin and misery of others and serving and helping others. What an angelic joy this! What a divine satisfaction this!! What a blessed activity all this !!!

XVI

GOODNESS-BASED SENSE OF JUSTICE.

Along with the sense of duty and the sense of discipline etc., which grew and developed in Bhagwan's unique heart, the *sense of justice* too evolved in him and manifested itself in his various activities. What do we understand by the sense of justice? By this glorious sense we mean freedom from all kinds of biases and prejudices when dealing with others in various relations. This sense too evolved in Bhagwan at Roorkee. He came to be distinguished there as a person not only possessed of high senses of duty and discipline but as one who was above all kinds of biases and prejudices and fearlessly fair and frank in his dealings.

(1) It happened once that Bhagwan was called upon to check the results of levelling of certain places done by two parties of students of the engineering class, one consisting of Europeans and the other of Indians. There was some difference in the results. Both considered their own result to be correct. The Principal was in a fix how to decide. If one was correct the other was bound to be incorrect. At last he deputed Bhagwan to find out what the correct level reading of the two points was. Bhagwan went out to do the levelling from a different route which was 19 miles. He took the work in hand with his usual zeal, earnestness and sense of responsibility and completed it in two days. He brought the result to the Principal. That agreed with that of the Indian party. This perplexed the Principal who was a European, for it went against the result of the European party. Bhagwan said to the Principal that if he were permitted to again go to the field and verify his result, he would be in a position to say with authority, whether the result he had arrived at was correct or not. The Principal had already been considerably impressed by Bhagwan's high character. He agreed. Bhagwan went again all the distance over to re-check his level readings and calculations, etc. He found that his result was again the same which agreed with that of the Indian students. He then went to the Principal and submitted to him with all certainty that there could be no doubt about the correctness of his result. The Principal was fully satisfied with this unbiased finding of Bhagwan and gave marks to both the parties according to it.

(2) As examiner Bhagwan took the greatest possible care to allot marks to his students with due justice and allowed nothing to influence him in this. Similarly when the question papers were set by other examiners and Bhagwan was asked to examine the answer copies, he observed the same absolutely impartial attitude. Once he was deputed to examine the papers of the final test of a class of the college. There were two students who used to secure first or second position in various college examinations. As the

students were well balanced competitors so when the answer books were sent to Bhagwan, he felt impelled to do justice to both and to allow nothing to interfere in his sacred resolve. He therefore took the answer books of both and kept them apart on his table. To be scrupulously exact in marking, he took up the first question and then read the replies of both these competitors side by side. He examined every answer of theirs in this way. He did this in order to allow not even some time to dim his impression, as is bound to be the case by the time the whole answer book of one boy is gone through first and then other is taken up. He therefore examined every answer of both side by side and then allotted marks to them. This caution was not suggested to Bhagwan by anybody. No teacher in that college was known to be so very scrupulous. It was the sense of justice itself which in its own beautiful and brilliant light suggested the ways and means to avoid even the faintest possibility of doing injustice.

(3) Bhagwan was only an Assistant Surveying Master at Roorkee when an incident occurred which showed that even when he was in teens, he possessed this sense to a remarkable extent. Bhagwan, besides his teaching work, worked, also as general superintendent of a block of the boarding house. He came to know that a young man who was leaving for home on a short leave had been caught red-handed, with costly clothes under his arm which he had stolen from the box of another student. The Principal was informed of this unhappy incident. He appointed Bhagwan and one other teacher to investigate into the matter and make a full report. The matter was gone through by them. Both sides were heard. The man was found guilty and then a report was made to the Principal. On this report submitted by the above committee, the Principal at once struck off the name of the student from the rolls and rusticated him for all time from the college.

This young man was a very cunning youth. Though guilty he filed, with the advice of some wicked men, a complaint that the decision arrived at was wrong, and he had been therefore defamed and brought unjustly into disrepute in the eyes of others. The two investigating teachers too were dragged to court. This was the first occasion when Bhagwan went to court. He was put in witness box. His examination began. He narrated the facts as they were. During his examination the wily youth, in order to create some doubt on Bhagwan's evidence in the mind of the magistrate, said in a low, yet so audible voice as the magistrate could hear, "Sir! speak the truth at least in court." By this he insinuated that Bhagwan was giving false evidence and therefore there was a need of appealing to his heart. The truth and justice-loving nature of Bhagwan received a deep offence by this covert insinuation. He burst forth, of course, in a tone louder than is permitted in courts, "My entire evidence that I am tendering is nothing but absolute truth." The court took exception to Bhagwan's loud voice. But it all the same received the impression that the witness before it was a true witness

and the evidence that he was tendering was beyond doubt. The magistrate took some other evidence and then decided the case against that wily, cunning and desperate young man.

(4) It was in the year 1872 when Bhagwan served in Roorkee College as Head Surveying Master, that he lived in a rented house in the town. One evening when he returned home from a walk, he was told by his noble wife that a Muslim young man who had given such and such as his name had left some caps for his use. Bhagwan was amazed to hear this. He was at a loss to comprehend as to why at all that student should have left the caps. A light flashed on Bhagwan that as the student was to appear for his final test as one of the candidates whom Bhagwan had to examine, he had made a present of the caps probably to show some favour to him. This settled Bhagwan in the line of action he thought best under the circumstances. The next day he called the student and said, "Can you tell me why you left some caps in my house yesterday?" The student replied, "Sir, I had been to my native place which is very famous for good caps. I have received great many boons at your hands as a pupil. I feel grateful. In expression of my gratitude I brought these caps and left them at your house. Please graciously accept them." Bhagwan said in reply, "Boy, gratitude is a very good feeling but this is not the time for you to show any such gratitude. First pass your test, then when you get an appointment and are thus able to earn your own money, you can have opportunities enough to show your gratitude in my relation. If you send any number of caps then, I would very willingly accept them."

The caps were returned to him. The boy passed the examination. He got a government job. But never during his entire tenure of service did he send any present to Bhagwan. It is one thing to make a present to anybody in order to serve some overt or covert interest. This is selfishness. But it is quite another thing to be moved by genuine feeling of gratitude and in satisfaction thereof to lay an offering before any benefactor. Gratitude is a rare trait in mankind.

Bhagwan therefore refused to accept that present of a doubtful nature so that there may be nothing to influence him in the least in his capacity as a just examiner.

These are but a few instances out of the many of the drama which this blessed force of the sense of justice played in the life of Bhagwan at Roorkee when he was under twenty-three years of age. Life free of all biases is a marvel which cannot but excite wondrous admiration from others. It is a life which is absolutely rare in the world. The family biases, the racial biases, the communal biases, the national biases, the colour biases, the creed biases, etc., have vitiated and poisoned the life springs of mankind. Hence the dealings of one race with another, of one community with another, of one nation with another, of one religion with another, etc., are,

more often than not, highly unjust and productive of the greatest possible mischief. The Gods of the world have joined forces with this degraded life of mankind. The Gods of the so-called world religions are partial, jealous and fanatic. The result is that they have helped to infect the already morally weak life of mankind with the hellish serum of prejudice, of bias, of bigotry, of fanaticism along with all the attendant one thousand and one evils.

How refreshing, how elevating, how attractive and spiritually uplifting is the sight of this unique soul, who was above all forms of prejudices and biases at an age when the youthful passions run riot and youthful predilections to things and persons opposed to justice are aggressively present, and who developed this trait to the most glorious pitch, with the progress of time.

XVII

SERVICE IN VARIOUS RELATIONS.

1. IN RELATION TO HIS REVERED PARENTS.

Bhagwan's higher feeling of gratitude not only showed him his benefactors but led him on to pay off the debt of gratitude by actual and practical service in their relation. How he felt in relation to his parents, can be gathered from a number of letters which Bhagwan wrote to his revered father during his stay at Roorkee and other places. After defraying his personal expenses he used to send all the available money to his revered father for his or family's use, etc. The letters, extracts from some of which we give below, speak for themselves.

1. Service of parents with money.

In his letter dated the 24th April, 1872, Bhagwan thus wrote to his revered father :—

"I have always been sending money to you. I wanted to send you this month a sum of Rs.....but as I have to meet some calls, I am sending you ten rupees less. You fully know my circumstances. Up to now I have been sending you all moneys that I could save for your use or for the use of other family members. I have been keeping for myself just enough to meet my requirement."

Again in the letter dated the 9th September, 1872, he wrote :—

"Please pay off the remaining debts at once. I am sending you.....rupees. Please keep half of it for yourself and with the other half clear off all the debts and take proper receipts from the creditors. *It is an imperative duty on man to discharge his debts as early as possible.* Please make no delay in this."

In his letter dated the 28th November 1872, he wrote :—

"I am sending you three notes of the value of.....rupees by registered post. Kindly accept them and send me due acknowledgment."

Bhagwan's revered father passed away in the end of the year 1873. Bhagwan thereafter continued to help his widowed mother and his younger brother.

From Lahore Bhagwan wrote as under to his mother in his letter dated the 13th December, 1875 :—

"My dear mother, I am sending you along with this letter a note of Rs.....for your personal use. *It gives me great satisfaction to know that you are pleased and satisfied with me in every way.* I am anxious that you may be more and more pleased with me..... Kindly consider me always your dutiful and serviceable child. Feel no hesitation at all in opening your heart to me and telling

me what you actually are in need of. I will try as far as possible to meet all your requirements as are proper.

I hope to send a note of.....for your use every month."

2. *Service of parents during their illness.*

In his letter dated the 1st June, 1870, Bhagwan wrote to his revered father from Roorkee as follows:—

"Dear father, I sent a prescription for your bleeding piles in my letter dated the 21st May. You have as yet not replied to it. I am feeling very anxious about your health. So long as the illness continues please keep me informed about it every second or third day."

Again he wrote:—

"I am very sorry to know that your bleeding piles complaint still continues and you have not got rid of it. I am sending to you along with this a prescription from a *Hakim*. Kindly get it prepared. I hope this will remove your trouble." (Letter dated Roorkee, 19th July, 1871.)

Again in his letter dated the 3rd March, 1873, he wrote to his revered father from Bahawalpur:—

"I got your letter to-day. I have been deeply pained to read of your complaint having gone worse. If you suffer from dry itch (सूखी खाज), you may mix some powdered mustard seed in curd, and rub it on your whole body. After some time take bath with cold water. I hope you will benefit by its use. But if you suffer from wet itch, use the enclosed prescription." (That prescription was put in that letter—Author.)

"So far food is concerned, please give up the use of sour things and molasses. For the inflammation of the hand you can use hot poultice. Please use no medicine of any quack. Kindly keep me informed every now and then, so that my anxiety may, to some extent, be relieved."

Again, Bhagwan wrote in another letter:—

"I am feeling deeply distressed to know that your trouble continues. I wish that when I return home, I may bring you with me to Roorkee and get you treated by a doctor here. There is a European doctor who is considered expert in his line. I hope his treatment will surely benefit you." (Roorkee, dated the 20th August, 1872.)

"It is true that the bleeding piles are very troublesome. You have been reduced very much. I wish to get you treated by a European doctor here. I wish to bring you and dear mother here in the month of October. Kindly keep ready." (Roorkee, 22nd August, 1872.)

Addressing a letter dated December 1873 from Lahore to his noble wife, Bhagwan wrote:—

“ Dear Lilavati !

It is desirable that you should not observe *purdah* (covering of face) from my father. Please go yourself to him. Enquire personally about his health. Attend to him in his illness. This is your sacred duty.”

Again Bhagwan wrote to her, on 16th December, 1873 :—

“ Dear Lilavati !

Since my return to Lahore I have written several letters to revered father. But he has sent me no letter in his own hand in reply. I fear he may be very ill. I pass very anxious time because of his illness.”

Still again he wrote :—

“ Dear Lilavati !

I am very sorry to hear that dear mother is ill. You should serve her as best as you can and make her happy. After offering my very humble obeisance to her, tell her that her illness distresses me very much and I regret that being away from home, I am not able to personally attend to her.” (Roorkee, 29th October, 1870.)

2. IN RELATION TO HIS YOUNGER BROTHER.

Bhagwan was the eldest surviving child of his revered parents. Ten years after, his younger brother was born. His name was Pandit Ram Narayan. Bhagwan possessed very tender feelings of love for the welfare of his younger brother. If Pandit Ram Narayan ever fell ill, Bhagwan grew very uneasy and sad, and his one desire was to do all, not only to see him cured and healthy, but happy and strong. As long as Bhagwan lived at Akbarpur, he found deep joy in fondling him, nursing him, and making him happy. But when he left for Roorkee, his heart yearned all the more for the good of the boy. He wrote several letters to his revered father concerning his younger brother, not only during his studentship at Roorkee, but even when he was in service there. These letters throw a flood of light on the higher kind of relation he felt for his brother. Extracts from some of them are given below :—

(a) *Concerning his Education.*

“ My dear father !

Please do admit Ram Narayan into the school. He must first begin to learn Hindi and thereafter he may learn Persian and English. Please allow no delay in giving him education.” (Roorkee, 18th January, 1867.)

“ Kindly make all possible efforts to educate Ram Narayan. Education is of very great value. He himself has no consciousness of its value as yet. Hence if you bring pressure to bear upon him he would bless you for it afterwards. Please leave no stone unturned for his education. When he comes here to live withme, I shall try with all my heart to educate him.” (Roorkee, 14th March, 1868.)

"Kindly do your level best to give education to Ram Narayan. If he is allowed to waste his life now in idle games and pursuits, we shall have to harvest nothing but sorrow later on." (Roorkee, 15th June, 1868.)

"Please attend seriously to Ram Narayan's education. I think it is desirable that he may begin his study of Persian now...I feel a strong urge to give up my service, join some college and receive further education in English." (Roorkee, 14th October, 1868.)

"I have often and repeatedly enquired from you about the progress in education made by Ram Narayan. But I have received no reply up to now from you in that connection." (Roorkee, 12th July, 1869.)

"I have been delighted to get a letter from Ram Narayan. As a mark of my joy at this, I want to give him some present. If you can kindly send me his measurements, I may get a suit made for him and bring it with me when I come home." (Roorkee, 6th March, 1871.)

In the year 1872 Bhagwan brought Pandit Ram Narayan to Roorkee in order to keep him under his direct supervision and give him further education. He wrote some letters to his revered father about the progress of his younger brother which would give an idea of Bhagwan's efforts and feelings in this connection :—

"I myself teach Ram Narayan here. But he pays no attention to his studies. I am trying my best to keep him happy and look after his studies. But I regret to say that he feels no inclination for studies, hence lot of my efforts bear no fruit." (Roorkee, 20th March, 1873.)

"I have arranged for the education of Ram Narayan...He seems more fond of games than of studies. Hence he does not pay enough attention to his education." (Roorkee, 10th November, 1873.)

(b) *Concerning his illness.*

"I have been deeply pained to read in your letter about the illness of Ram Narayan. Please arrange for his treatment as best as you can." (Roorkee, 2nd April, 1869.)

"My heart has received a deep shock at the news of the illness of Ram Narayan. Kindly keep me informed of the details of his illness every now and then. Kindly write to me if he gets shivering along with fever and what medicine is being given to him. Has he been given purgative? On receipt of this letter please give me all facts immediately. If his illness gets serious, kindly take him to Cawnpore to have him treated by some doctor. After getting all facts I can also send medicine from here." (Roorkee, 7th August, 1870.)

"After getting a letter from you about the illness of Ram Narayan, I wrote in reply that you should kindly furnish me with details of his illness, so that I may send some medicine from here.

But I have as yet received no reply from you. I am feeling very anxious." (Roorkee, 18th August, 1870.)

This shows that *Vedant* had no effect in injuring Bhagwan's masterful force of love for goodness, though it, as a rule, dried up all the springs of human affection and higher feelings on the hoax that all that exists is unreal and that one *Brahm* alone is real, and that all actions—good or bad—are so many links in the chain of rebirths and hence deserve avoiding. This love kept fresh and strong all the higher springs of higher life in Bhagwan, *viz.*, reverence, gratitude, sympathy, service, etc. Hence though Bhagwan assimilated *Veragya* or detachment from things and persons on the basis of low-love of happiness, his ties based on love for goodness grew stronger and mightier. This was why Bhagwan's soul gradually reached those wondrous heights of psychic life which enabled him not only to remain ever beyond the reach of low-loves and low-hates, but to feel and establish highest form of relationship with human and sub-human kingdoms. His soul was bound to human and sub-human worlds by higher-loves and higher-hates which kept him ever busy in bringing about the highest psychic changes in the hearts of those who were drawn to him, and in wishing good and doing the highest form of service to them. So the perennial waves of highest influences, that ever emanate from his unique soul, form the only suitable environments for awakening an anxiety in all such fit souls who possess the capacity.

(1) to get free from the slavery to low-loves and low-hates, and

(2) to grow and develop higher and altruistic forces and thereby *not to break* but *establish* a higher relationship with beings and objects around.

XVIII

PROGRAMME OF RELIGIOUS EXERCISES.

Bhagwan Dev Atma loved to associate with those with whom he could converse on the topics of higher life so dear to his noble heart. But this *Sangat* (or company) of congenial souls was only one phase of his growing religious life. This alone could not satisfy him. He therefore took to individual *Sadhans* (religious exercises). He learnt *Sandhya* from a Pandit and began performing it daily. This *Sadhan* formed the second phase of his life. As he could not spare time during the day for study, he would sit at night to read the Urdu translation of *Upnishadas* by Alakhdhari. He tried to live as simple a life as was consistent with his ideal. He confined his food only to bread, one kind of pulse and milk. In order to rise above the love of taste, he would mix up various preparations together and then take them. This mixing up of pulse, milk, bread, etc., into one dish was repugnant to his taste. But he tried to repress that. He felt no attraction therefore for any dish merely because it was delicious. Several times he gave up sleeping on cot and slept on the floor.

Sangat and *Sadhan*, i.e., performance of *Sandhya*, reading and recitation of religious scriptures, prayer and contemplation alone could not satisfy him. The third phase of his religious exercise was *behaviour*. He laid down a clear cut and definite programme for his daily conduct. The rules which he framed and observed for moulding his life in relation to others were as under :—

I. SOLITUDE.

1. As far as possible to remain alone and to prefer solitude to society as a better and more desirable mode of life.

II. GOOD COMPANY AND USEFUL TALK.

2. Always to remain in good society, when it was necessary to live in one. To avoid the company of the ignorant and the evil persons.

3. To have as little of conversation with others as possible. To prefer silence to talk.

4. To avoid exposing the sins or faults of others without an urgent necessity.

5. To talk of the virtues of others with due respect and reverence.

6. To avoid gossip, i.e., to refrain from entering into such conversation with others as would profit none.

III. TRUTH SPEAKING.

7. Always to speak the truth and under no circumstances to utter a falsehood.

8. To avoid speaking so ambiguously as to keep the truth hidden from those spoken to, and not to lead them into an error.

IV. TO FULFIL RIGHT ENGAGEMENTS OR VOWS.

9. To feel as keen about abiding by all the right engagements as one feels keen to have a male issue or to feel as anxious as a patient does to get rid of his illness or to feel as deeply as a poor man yearns after wealth.

V. HUMILITY.

10. To consider all things of the world as transitory and non-essential in comparison to soul welfare and to foster no egoistic feeling on the basis of any power possessed by one.

11. To feel no hesitation or fear in confessing one's faults or shortcomings before others when necessary.

VI. SELF RESPECT.

12. To avoid asking others for loan, even of ordinary things.

13. To refrain from accepting anything from others without reasonable ground.

VII. AVOIDING INJURY TO OTHERS.

14. To refrain from giving any pain to others without any reasonable and just cause.

VIII. ALTRUISM.

15. To remove any just need of others as far as it be possible.

16. To impart to others right teachings.

Bhagwan did not copy these rules from any other. Bhagwan's growing light suggested these rules and his unique soul prized them as a treasure for life. His most promising soul could not remain content with mere detachment from the things and objects of the world and with mere individual exercises of reading, contemplation and worship with an object of gaining knowledge and realization of the so-called *Brahma*. Up to the age of twenty-three Bhagwan had attained a stage of life which would have amazed and delighted those caught up by the false philosophy of *Vedant*. But Bhagwan was not born to be guided by mere philosophies. The sovereign force that ruled him then was love for goodness. This wonderful force impelled him with irrepressible impetus for all that was good. The life of true *Veragya* lived by his *Guruji Maharaj* appealed to him most. Hence his masterful love led him to it and helped him with an astonishing speed to receive his influences and assimilate them in his own nature.

Love of goodness laid an imperative command on him not only

to avoid doing any form of injury to others but to do good to others as far as possible.

The self-same love of goodness laid an imperative command on him to stand by his duties and obligations. Hence life of a so-called *Sadhu* who abandoned all his duties appeared an evil life to him. Though he respected Swami Brahma Anand for some of his noble traits, his programme of life failed to attract him.

The love of goodness also laid an imperative command on him to pay off the debt of obligations he owed to his parents, teachers and other benefactors. Hence though he believed the world to be *Maya* and all these connections as a play of this *Maya*, he could not go against his nature and so his inward urge led him to think of them and serve them most dutifully and whole-heartedly.

Hence Bhagwan was not affected by *Vedant* in a way as to love a life of inaction.

The rules framed by him for his conduct show how his noble nature urged him on to maintain a life of trustworthiness and service in relation to others.

XIX

MORE SUITABLE ENVIRONMENTS.

Love of goodness was the one dominant note of Bhagwan Dev Atma's life from his very childhood. This was progressive in its nature. Hence with time and age it grew and blossomed. This love of goodness demanded, as its necessary adjunct, the growth of reason, so as to help Bhagwan to know and accept more and more what was really good for the benefit of his soul-life. The development of reason and acquisition of progressive knowledge depended indispensably upon another spring of action, *i.e.*, love for education. It was this masterful force which early evolved in Bhagwan's soul and imperiously led him on to break down all barriers raised against his love for higher education. It was this irrepressible psychic force which, without any precedent to guide him in his family or his small town or without any direct inducement from anybody, seized tenaciously a chance suggestion made to him that there was an opening for him at Roorkee—far off from his birth place—to receive higher education. He found no rest till he had actually joined the college after passing the entrance test. His soul had outgrown its sphere of childhood and the young eagle sought instinctively to leave the nest and soar in high heaven.

The blessed Roorkee provided Bhagwan not only a scope for higher education but a suitable opportunity to come in contact with Rishiji—Shri Pandit Shiv Dayal Singh—whose influences gave a marvellous higher turn to Bhagwan Dev Atma's life. Bhagwan's soul could soar unfettered in the regions of higher life, free as it was from his very childhood, from the dwarfing and corrupting love for happiness which forms the nursery for all low-loves and low-hates. Hence with an uncommon power of receptivity, Bhagwan's unique soul absorbed his *Guruji's* teachings, suggestions and influences so far as they appealed to his love for goodness. Thus at this stage he not only formed a definite ideal of life, but developed an unextinguishable love for all that pertained to the welfare of his soul-life. The world and its fascinations shrank into absolute insignificance in his eyes. Hence at the age of only twenty-three years Bhagwan was not only completely above every kind and form of undue attachment to money, name, fame, power, position, wife, children, etc., etc., but he judged the worth of everything around him according as they subserved the interests of his soul welfare. He lived and moved in this world. But he was not of earth or earthly things. His soul soared higher and higher into the regions of soul-life. Hence when Rishiji instructed him never to speak an untruth whatever may be the cost, but always to speak the truth. Bhagwan's unique soul hungrily assimilated it as the principle of his conduct. It became the very breath of his nostrils. He therefore kept vigilant

watch upon his words and actions, so that even in unconscious moments his behaviour or deeds should not violate this glorious principle and that it should conform to truth and truth alone. This glorious trait of character in Bhagwan's life considerably impressed those who came in contact with him.

As Rishiji passed all his available time, beyond the hours of duty in the college, in higher contemplation, in *Jap*, reading, prayers, etc., so Bhagwan readily assimilated this trait in his life and thereafter he spent all his waking hours beyond the hours of duty at the college, in *Jap*, prayers, contemplation, reading, elevating talk, etc., etc. As a teacher in the college, he regulated his life with a stoic severity in a way as to do all that he possibly could in the best discharge of his duties ; for failure to do them as best as he could, meant countenancing evil which was impossible for his love of goodness to bear. Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul was so singularly tuned to love for goodness that anything that in any way promised to contribute to his soul-welfare was very dear to him. No psychic force of adverse nature could raise its head against this all-powerful love. The adoption of what he saw to be good was not a problem with him. It was a matter of course with his unique soul. All that was needed was knowledge of what was good for his soul-welfare. As soon as he was apprised of it Bhagwan's soul zealously assimilated it as the only course of conduct. Throughout his most marvellous pilgrimage of life on this planet for over 78 years, Bhagwan Dev Atma manifested this magnificent trait without a break. Like a law of Nature this trait was inviolable in the conduct of Bhagwan.

Mere love of education could and did evolve Bhagwan's intellectual powers. But the light which could reveal the truth and falsity in all that he discovered respecting soul-welfare was beyond the scope of intellectual powers. The light that these powers generated could only penetrate the physical world and its laws including the body of man. Intellectual light was absolutely incompetent to open up the world of soul-life. The only light which possesses the capacity to unfold the region of soul-life is *Dev Joti* or the highest psychic light which is produced by the unique psychic forces, i.e., love of truth and hatred for all untruth, and love for goodness and hatred for all that offends against it or is evil, sinful or criminal and wrong. Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul had from his very childhood grown the wonderful forces of love for goodness and hatred for wrong. These were progressive in their nature. But Bhagwan's soul needed some other environments for his further evolution of love of truth and hatred for untruth. It was necessary for the evolution of his complete soul-organism. For it was then alone that he could grow the glorious capacity of avoiding all forms of *Ahit* or wrong in relation to human and sub-human worlds of Nature. It was then alone that he could grow the progressive capacity of doing good to them ever increasingly. It was then alone that he could on his part, establish highest harmony with them.

Roorkee provided no suitable environments for the further evolution of Bhagwan's above hereditary highest soul-powers. This unique plant had outgrown its surrounding conditions. It had therefore to seek more suitable conditions elsewhere. In the course of Nature's own process of evolution, as circumstances had cropped up which had necessitated the moving of this singular child of sixteen years from Akbarpore to Roorkee, so by the working of the same process of evolution, circumstances arose here too which took this singular youth of twenty-three to more fitting environments for his further development, in order to fit him for the fulfilment of the mission he had to achieve. This was not designed by Bhagwan himself or any human soul. The grand and ever progressive Law of Evolution by the working of which (and without any direct appeal from any individual or group of individuals) the birth of this singular child was brought about with a heredity of unique psychic forces—the same grand and progressive process of evolution provided all the phenomena and the fit conditions for the evolution of those mighty heredity psychic forces with which Bhagwan came into this world.

LEAVING ROORKEE.

Roorkee held the highest fascination for Bhagwan so long as his *Guruji Maharaj* was alive. He could not bear to live outside Roorkee. The personality of Rishiji had attracted Bhagwan so much and his apostolic devotion for him was so full and complete, that it would let nothing else to rule his heart. Twice he went out, since he was appointed to higher salaries, once at Kosi and the second time at Bahawalpur. Though he had far better chances of promotion and emoluments there, his heart simply yearned to come back to Roorkee even at the sacrifice of his prospects and monetary advantages. He would have given up the appointment itself, had not Rishiji desired otherwise. This supreme flame of love had no rival in Bhagwan's heart. This unique love made Roorkee the most sacred temple for him.

But Rishiji whom he loved so deeply passed away. This left a terrible void in Bhagwan's heart. Roorkee looked a dull dreary desert, shorn of every attraction. He felt lonely. He felt unhappy. Bhagwan had formed no other ties there. His service alone kept him there. Though his heart ached at the most painful bereavement that he had suffered, he heroically stuck to his guns so long he held the post. He allowed nothing to interfere with the most faithful discharge of his duties. The work was heavy. His sense of duty was uncompromising. He therefore felt the strain and his health suffered. Loss of health, loneliness of heart and a vague but powerful hankering for new and more fitting environments, kept his soul ever ready to leave Roorkee at the earliest opportunity.

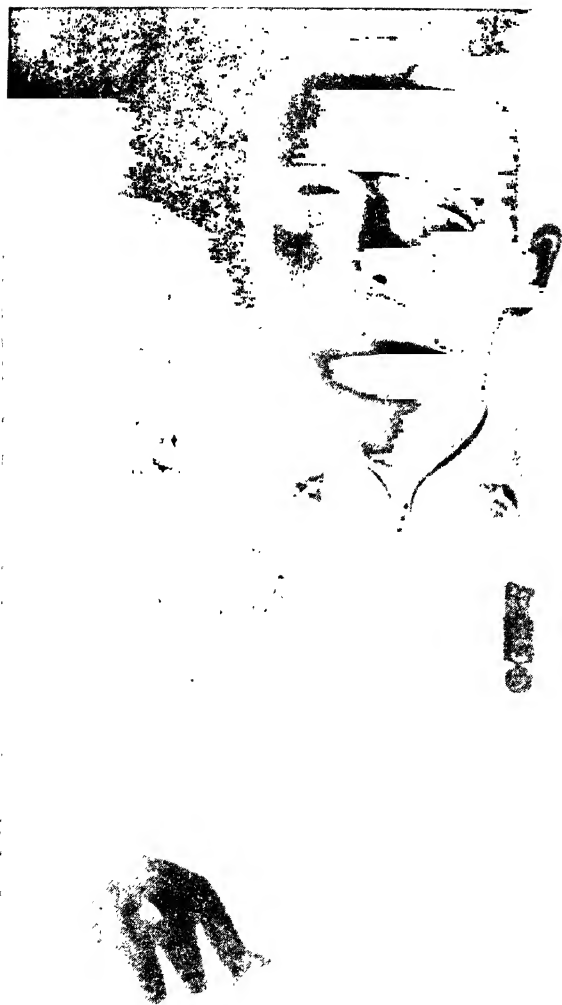
At this juncture too, circumstances arose which were not of his making, but which provided an outlet for him to leave Roorkee. He did not foresee what great promise these new conditions held for his future evolution. He simply saw in them a chance to leave Roorkee. The Punjab Government Gazette contained a notification that the Educational Department of the Punjab had created five new appointments of Drawing Masters in five High Schools, and the Director of the Public Instruction requested the Principal of Thomson Civil Engineering College, Roorkee, to provide him with qualified men for these posts. The starting salary for each post was Rs. 100 running to Rs. 150 by annual increments of Rs. 10 for five years. Bhagwan immediately applied to his Principal to recommend him for any one of them. The correspondence went on for some months. The Principal was a very good man. On the one hand he did not wish to stand in the way of Bhagwan's better prospects, and on the other, being a responsible head of his institution, he could not bear to lower the efficiency of its staff by allowing a capable teacher to go away. Thinking that

Bhagwan was desirous of going away for the sake of better salary, he one day called Bhagwan and told him, that though he could not raise the salary of his post, he (the Principal) had several funds under his direct control, out of which he could pay him in the interests of the college Rs. 15 more every month. Bhagwan thereupon assured him that money was no inducement whatsoever for him, and that he was ready to accept any of these five posts even at less salary than he was drawing at Roorkee. The Principal knew Bhagwan's character. He was impressed with the sincerity of his expression and he agreed to part with him on the specific condition that Bhagwan should give him a capable substitute.

After some further talk and consideration, the Principal agreed to accept one of the assistants of Bhagwan to fill his vacancy, provided he was given some training. The college session was about to close. The long vacation was about to begin. The Principal told Bhagwan definitely that he should return to college after the vacation and should train up his assistant for his job, and make the work going properly in all branches of teaching entrusted to Bhagwan. This was accordingly done. The Principal was satisfied.

He then called Bhagwan and asked him which of the appointments he liked best, that the post at Delhi had already been filled up and the remaining four appointments were at Lahore, Gujrat, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur. Bhagwan would have naturally liked to be appointed to the post at Delhi that being the nearest station to his home but so far as the remaining four posts were concerned, he had no special liking for any. He was therefore in a fix which place to choose. Here Bhagwan's own higher inner nature impelled him to a course of action which was the best, and which ultimately proved the only best course. It was an instinct with Bhagwan to give up his will, when he thought he was ignorant and somebody else whom he could trust knew better. He therefore at once appealed to the Principal to choose any place for him which he considered best in his interests. The Principal knew Bhagwan's high character and progressive nature. Hence he suggested Lahore as the most suitable place for him. The reason that he gave for this was, that Lahore, being the capital of the Punjab, would better provide, all kinds of environments for his further and higher evolution for a progressive nature like his. Bhagwan at once agreed to this and requested the Principal to forward his name for that post. The Principal at once wrote a letter to the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, to appoint him at Lahore and handed it over to Bhagwan. Bhagwan took that letter with him to Lahore and submitted it to the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab. The Director in his turn gave Bhagwan a letter for the Headmaster of the Government High School at Lahore, which he took to him and was consequently given charge of his new job.

This was how Bhagwan arrived at Lahore.



COL. A. M. LANG, R. E.
Principal of the Thomason Engineering College, Roorkee
1871—1877

ADVENT TO LAHORE.

By the end of the year 1873 when Bhagwan was twenty-three years of age, he came to Lahore. Principal Lang's sound advice, readily accepted by Bhagwan, opened up for him the most suitable conditions, for the further unfoldment of his unique powers. Neither Bhagwan, nor Principal Lang, nor any other person had any inkling whatsoever of the wondrous heights of soul development and highest service to which Bhagwan Dev Atma was ultimately to rise in that place; and the new life, new moral tone and new ideals that he was to endow the world with. Principal Lang earned the everlasting name in the history of the Dev Samaj in having been an unconscious instrument to lead the footsteps of Bhagwan to a place, which proved to be the most suitable for his further evolution. There was a friend of Bhagwan at Roorkee who at his request suggested to him the name of a gentleman at Lahore who had once been his (that friend's) class-fellow. Perhaps he gave Bhagwan an introductory letter for him. This gentleman was none other than Pandit Navin Chandra Roy who was considered to be the Founder of the Brahmo Samaj at Lahore. Pandit Navin Chandra Roy was a learned scholar of Sanskrit. He had a reputation of being a highly religious and good-natured man. And of all the persons living at Lahore at that time, his was, it appears, the only personality which was after Bhagwan's heart. Hence Bhagwan after having been introduced to him in this way was naturally drawn to him. Pandit Navin Chandra Roy too felt deeply drawn to Bhagwan's intensely devout and religious nature. It was in the house of this gentleman that several religious topics were often discussed by people who congregated there, and regular debates were held every week in the club organised there. This atmosphere of thought, discussion and debate on subjects of social and religious matters by men, who held enlightened views, was the one most essential thing for which Bhagwan's soul had felt a vague yearning. At Roorkee this atmosphere was utterly absent. Hence there were no stimuli present there to awaken Bhagwan's thought and offer room for the free play of his love of truth to unfold.

Environments no doubt form a mighty and indispensable factor for the unfoldment of the inner powers in any man. But they cannot awaken the forces, the germs of which are not possessed by him. They cannot make potent what is not at all latent. Hence since the best possible educational environments are incompetent to help a cat to learn mathematics; or a cow, buffalo, camel, lion, elephant, etc., to learn politics; or any animal whatsoever to learn the science of architecture, in the same way the best possible stimuli can never awaken in a heart, bereft of the germs of love

for knowledge, to grow that mighty, blissful and essential force. The heredity counts as much, if not more, than environments. Hence those environments which stimulated and awakened in Bhagwan powers of surprising grandeur, affected very little or not at all those who were void of those hereditary germs which Bhagwan was born with. A chance suggestion from somebody roused an irrepressible flame in Bhagwan to go to Roorkee to have higher education there, while even his example and his comparatively brilliant prospects failed to rouse his contemporaries of his birth-place—at least for half a century—ever to go and join that college. At Roorkee Rishiji—Pandit Shiv Dayal Singh—lived. His brilliant and high souled personality impressed some people. But there was none who was so magnetically drawn and so deeply influenced by him as Bhagwan. Bhagwan developed (1) a masterful force of *Veragya* or true renunciation and (2) an overmastering passion for all that pertained to *soul-welfare* at the feet of Rishiji *Maharaj*. These two mighty psychic forces laid the foundation for that unique life of *Devat* (divinity) which was to distinguish Bhagwan from all mankind, exactly in the same way as progressive intellect has marked out man from the entire animal world.

At Lahore there existed the atmosphere of study, debate, discussion, contemplation over subjects of varied interests. But there were thousands who felt no attraction for them at all. Those who joined them did not profit equally as their respective hereditary differences made it impossible for them to profit. Some progressed to some extent and then their growth stopped. Bhagwan Dev Atma's intensely progressive soul once led on the path of love for true knowledge, never cried halt up to the last day of his life on this planet. As we shall see later on, his unique masterpiece, the third part of the third edition of *Dev Shastra*—wonderfully enlarged—which is entitled "Philosophy of Man" was written and completed by him when he was 78 years of age. The materials for the remaining parts of the *Shastra Dev* were also collected by him in order to complete the further volumes of this unique production (*i.e.*, *Shastra Dev*) when his over-taxed body completely gave way under the crushing strain; and to the deepest sorrow of his insignificant followers and the misfortune of the world, he passed away.

The uniqueness of Bhagwan Dev Atma therefore consisted in his unique heredity of the highest psychic powers which sought their environments and developed his soul to marvellous stature.

PROGRESSIVE LOVE FOR TRUTH.

When Bhagwan left Roorkee, he was by faith a *Vedantist*. He firmly believed in God as the one reality. He had given up all his traditional beliefs in the Hindu mythological gods and goddesses. He had given up all those false and unmeaning Brahmanical rites, ceremonies, false food and other distinctions which he knew to be wrong. Up to this age Bhagwan had developed the power of receptivity or responsiveness to higher and still higher environments. The power of cogent and critical reflection was just dawning in his unique soul. But one thing that formed the un-failing trait of his life was his masterful desire to live upto his beliefs. His precepts and practices blended into a singular harmony. His noble wife was his wonderful companion in this path. Her soul fully responded to her beloved husband's wishes, thoughts and ideals. Bhagwan had given her sufficient education to keep pace with him in his march for higher life. She was in fact his *Sah Dharmini* (a co-traveller in the spiritual path of life).

Some time after he came to Lahore and breathed in the new environments as stated above, Bhagwan felt the teachings, beliefs, social reforms, etc., of the Brahmo Samaj as nearest approach to his own growing views on religion and social manners and customs. He therefore felt drawn towards it. For some time he thought over the beliefs and ideals of Brahmo Samaj. The intellectual and thought rousing atmosphere in which he breathed in Lahore, not only developed in him the powers of critical reflection, but it awakened a rare trait in him which even to-day, one can hardly meet with in the whole religious world. Bhagwan not only felt a mighty urge to state his views as they were without any exaggeration or alteration, and suffer the consequences of his frank expressions but felt an imperative desire to criticise his own beliefs, in order to find out for himself if there was any truth in them. To criticise one's own beliefs which one cherishes, is a psychological feat. It is possible for a man to change his views under the influences of another. But to sit in judgment on one's own beloved ideas and beliefs shows the presence of growing but singular love of truth which was respector of nothing else. This magnificent trait grew into a mighty all-conquering force of the life of Bhagwan so much so that all through his pilgrimage on this earth, it led him to criticise, analyse and sift his views, and abjure whatever he found false in them without caring for the cost,

Vedantic views he had imbibed from his beloved *Guru*. His devotion for Rishiji remained up to the last as deep as ever, but when his love of truth compelled him to sift his cherished beliefs, he could not but bring the searchlight of his awakened psychic powers on

them. As we shall find later on in Part IV, he did not care to cling to them, once he came to understand that *Vedant* philosophy was false and unsound.

What drama this mighty love of truth played in his unique life would form the most instructive, fascinating and elevating study for all those interested in the subject of soul evolution in the subsequent parts of the life of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

PART IV

EVOLUTION OF HIGHER LIFE

CULMINATING IN

EMBRACING OF THE UNIQUE LIFE MISSION.

I

LOVE OF TRUTH.

INTRODUCTION.

In the third part of this book we have dealt with one phase of the evolution of Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique powers—the powers, which prompted him to produce good and eradicate evil in several relations. The group of these two sets of psychic forces (*i. e.*, love of goodness and repulsion for evil) found great many channels and opportunities for manifesting themselves after Bhagwan came to Lahore, and they soon brought him in the forefront of public life as the acknowledged leader, the best orator, one of the greatest journalists, a fearless reformer and a dynamic moral force. It was in Lahore again that beside these two sets of highest psychic forces, Bhagwan found suitable conditions to evolve another set of unique forces, *i. e.*, Love for Truth and Repulsion for Untruth, which were still in their rudimentary stage. These forces, as they grew in him, made him a thorough-going and uncompromising critic of all the beliefs, doctrines, theories, established creeds, world-wide dogmas, etc., whether accepted by himself or by others. He could not respect a thing simply because it happened to be old or new, revealed or unrevealed, age-long or fresh, religious or secular, scriptural or non-scriptural, popular or unpopular, but he loved what was truth and hated what was untruth. The gradual evolution of this set of forces made him such a fearless and daring exponent of what he believed or found to be true, that those around him used to get nervous at his open and uncompromising denunciation of hypocrisy, insincerity, untruth or positive falsehood wherever found. This part IV of his life would deal very briefly with the story of the evolution and expression of these highest psychic forces in so far as they led him to give up his permanent and respectable government appointment in the Education Department and to devote his entire wonderful powers in the service of humanity.

Before we deal with the evolution of the unique psychic forces of love of truth and hatred for untruth in Bhagwan's wonderful soul, let us explain some preliminary questions as to what we mean by truth; what are the conditions requisite for seeing and grasping truth; what is the mental condition of man appropriate to receive truth and who can be a lover of truth, etc., etc.

What is meant by Truth? All that really and objectively exists in Nature and not subjectively in the fancy of man is Truth. Every event in Nature, every occurrence or phenomenon in Nature, every object in Nature, every uniformity in Nature is Real or True. What do we, then, mean by True knowledge? True knowledge means, knowledge gained, by our respective normal senses and mental and other soul powers of things, objects and events in the Cosmic

organism as they *in fact are* or happen. To conceive of objects or occurrences in Nature not as they really are or as they really happen, but as our mind predisposes us to believe is an illusion.

How to gain true knowledge? True knowledge is possible for a man only to the extent that he possesses adequate and corresponding senses or psychic powers for receiving it. All men are not alike so far as these psychic forces are concerned. Individuals differ in their knowledge according to the difference in number and intensity of these knowledge-affording forces. Those who possess greater number of these knowledge-affording forces developed to a sufficient extent, find a wider world of knowledge opened to them than those who are devoid of any of them or if they have them, they are not sufficiently developed.

Our various senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing give us a preliminary knowledge of the various objects in Nature. Sense of sight opens the world of light and colour. Sense of hearing opens the world of sound waves taking the forms of low or high sounds, noise or tune. Sense of touch gives us knowledge of the hardness or softness, etc. of things and objects. Senses of taste and smell open to us the world of things being sour or sweet, bitter or saltish, etc., and the world of different kind of odours respectively. Any person devoid of any of these senses would be, so far his direct knowledge is concerned, dead to the world that these senses open. A man born-blind would have no direct knowledge of colours and hence of natural beauties, scenes, and artificial ornamentation or decoration. All animals and men who possess these various outward senses get the knowledge open to them.

Above these are those various progressive mental forces of reason and logic which have evolved only in man and are absent in the entire animal world. It is these progressive mental forces which have helped man to probe beyond the surface reality of the objects to the underlying uniformities of Nature, known as laws, and to yoke to his chariot wheel various forces of Nature and thus control sea, air, land, electricity and other powers in Nature and thereby develop various marvellous sciences and the life of civilisation. This kind of knowledge can be gained not merely through outward senses but through progressive mental powers by observing, sifting and experimenting with the items of knowledge gained by sense perceptions.

Besides these faculties there are various desires and passions having their basis in the sense of pleasure or pain which man has inherited from his animal ancestors and which he has by the assistance of the progressive mental powers, developed into low-loves and low-hates. These are love of money and possession, love of tasteful things, love of power or position, love of lust, love of name, fame, love of wife and children, etc., and low-hates like jealousy, vindictiveness etc. These low-loves and low-hates open the world of various pleasures and pains which their gratification or non-gratification affords. They abound in the whole humanity and are the root cause

of all sins, evils and falsehoods and the consequent misery rampant on this earth.

Higher than these are various aesthetic forces. Higher above these are various soul powers which have developed in only some of the blessed human beings. These are called altruistic or other-seeking forces as opposed to selfish forces of low-loves and low-hates which produce ruthless sacrifice of the rights, claims and even existence of others for their own self-gratification. Such altruistic forces are known as sympathy, charity, mercy, benevolence, philanthropy, gratitude, reverence, resulting in the disinterested service of the body, mind or soul of others, etc. The consciousness which a man possesses through one or other of such altruistic forces is absolutely wanting in any man who is devoid of that force. A butcher is blind and deaf to the pains and agonies of animal life which a compassionate heart perceives with horror and tears, and hence while one delights in destroying animal life the other delights in saving, protecting and nursing it.

Then there are those various highest psychic forces which are called *Dev Shakties* and which not only complete the organism of the human soul but enable it to get absolute freedom from all dwarfing and destructive low-loves and low-hates and to walk steadily and for ever the path of progressive evolution of higher life. It is these highest psychic forces which have manifested themselves as complete love of truth and goodness and complete hatred for untruth and wrong. It is these unique psychic forces which are possessed by the Dev Atma. These unique forces generate unique light or Dev Joyti which enables the possessor to gain knowledge of those most precious truths relating to the nature of soul, laws of its evolution and dissolution, the degrading and degenerating nature of low-loves and low-hates and the laws of getting true freedom from them, the nature, beauty and glory of higher or altruistic forces and the laws of their evolution in man, and the true, supreme ideal of man's life, which are otherwise a completely sealed book to those devoid of those most blessed forces. Hence as regards these most wonderful truths none but Dev Atma alone can be a true teacher; because none but he lives in that world of light which reveals our duties and obligations in various relations so as to enable us to see what should not be done in various relations of man with respect to animal, plant and inanimate worlds and their various beings.

Why do People resort to Untruth? People resort to untruth because they are under the grip of the various low-loves and low-hates. We see all around us that not only there are millions of persons who are incapable of accepting truth but in countless cases they abjure truth and *willingly* embrace untruth. Why is it so? The fact is that though in his evolution from animal world, man has acquired, in rudimentary form, the germs of progressive intellect, his soul organism has not thereby become complete, i.e., though his bodily organism has attained to completion so far its various organs are concerned, his soul has not developed those highly necessary powers which could

complete its organism and thus, on the one hand, protect it from the evil effects of destructive forces of low-loves and low-hates and, on the other, develop higher harmony with the evolutionary process working in Nature, and thus put him on the path of progressive evolution. Man is not only devoid of such evolutionary forces but he possesses in his soul-constitution such heart forces (*viz.*, low-loves and low-hates) as lead it most powerfully to the path of untruth. Being ruled by such powers it is inevitable for man to love untruth.

A man possessed of low-love of imagination delights in believing in imaginary and false stories, myths and fictions. A man ruled by the low-loves of wealth, property, name, fame, power etc., has, as a rule, recourse to falsehood in order to obtain them. He composes false poems in order to flatter others. He gives false evidence, cooks up false cases, forges documents, publishes false advertisements in order to achieve his object. He stoops to hypocrisy and fraud. A man possessed of the low-love of self resorts to untruth to uphold his false beliefs and practices of his own creed, shows false humility by calling himself prince of sinners when he is not such; sings hymns, *bhajans* or poems in temples, churches, pagodas, etc., and offers prayers there which are false and with which even his own heart does not accord. A man possessed of the low-love of vindictiveness manufactures false accusations against others and slanders them without any foundation. A man possessed of the low-love of jealousy suppresses true praise of others and heaps on their heads all kinds of lies to defame them.

Hence those incompletely organised souls who are ruled and dominated by happiness-based low loves of fancy, property, name, fame, self, etc., and low-hates resulting in revenge and consequent injuries to others, cannot but have recourse to lies. They cannot but like untruth and thus grow enamoured of it. *It is because man is charmed by untruth that we find in every village and hamlet, city and town, all over the world, reign of falsehood.* No effect can be produced without a corresponding cause. Hence so long as the cause remains in tact, the effect must follow as a matter of course. So long as man is dominated by the forces that lead him to untruth (*viz.* low-loves and low-hates), he cannot but love untruth. As it is impossible to hatch a human child out of a hen's egg, in the same way it is impossible that a man possessed of above psychology can grow love of truth in the soil of his heart. Nay, such a soil of the human heart is on the contrary fatal to the very existence of love of truth. Such a heart can *never* grow even a *real desire* for truth. In absence of any real desire it is superfluous to expect such a soul to investigate truth. Those therefore among the theists who claim that they can accept truth wherever and whenever found are living in a fool's paradise. Their claim is absolutely childish and shows their abject ignorance. What to say of their ability to evolve in their soul various powers of love for Truth, these incompletely organised souls dominated as they are, by untruth-loving heart forces are unable even to

appreciate the Master soul who has evolved the unique forces of love of truth and repulsion for untruth in himself. Nay, more often than not they feel repulsion for him.

Again it is one thing to be compelled to follow wrong course under the lash of a most powerful low-love or low-hate, but it is quite a different thing when a man enjoys and adores untruth. In the former case the victim may at least say that though helpless in the grip of a mighty force he was not so blind as not to see the wrong in his action. But in the latter case the man becomes a devotee, a worshipper, a champion of untruth. Are there in the world devotees of untruth? Yes, there are; and their number is legion. As a devotee sings praises in honour of his deity, so a devotee of untruth bursts into rapturous songs in honour of his deity—the untruth. He preaches the essential necessity of untruth in every-day life. He considers it his best friend in his struggles to gain happiness and material things of the world. He does not confine his adoration to himself. He feels its importance and need even for the benefit of his family, for the great good of his society, of his creed and his nation, etc. He has couched his devotion for untruth in various sayings which are found in books and traditions. A Punjabi saying says:—

“मैं तां भूठ कटे जमें, भूठ आवे मेरे सैंयां कमें”

“Untruth and I were born in a litter; untruth is helpful to me in hundreds of ways.”

The Persian poet of highest fame, Saadi, says:—

“دارغ مصلحت آمیز به از استی فتنه خیز”

“A convenient lie is better than a troublesome truth.”

A Hindu Rishi has left a saying:—

“न ब्रूयात् सत्यम् प्रियम्”

“Never speak an unpleasant truth.”

A saying prevalent all over the world says:—

“The wheel of the world can never turn smoothly without the lubrication of the oil of untruth.”

One powerful section of Christianity has taught that *means are justified by the end*. Hence they have boldly laid down that recourse to falsehood is advisable if it can bring a soul to the fold of Christ.

The founder of Arya Samaj also preached a great necessity of this weapon of untruth when he said that if Shankeracharya adopted Vedantism merely to demolish Jainism and not as an honest creed, it was so far good.

An English proverb says:—

“Everything is fair in love and war.”

Thus untruth has cast on mankind the magic of its charm, the spell of its fascination, and the great lure of seduction for it, and thus completely captivated it. The untruth-ridden souls have advocated the use of untruth as of great utility in religion. In the name of religion man

has fabricated fibs and given them wide currency. He has invented several gods and goddesses, saints and *pirs* and their astonishing miracles. He has created false heavens and false hells to capture man's imagination. All these fibs which cannot stand for a second the lurid light of fact and truth are preserved in sacred books and religious scriptures. These fibs have won the allegiance of men who, on the one hand, have lacked and are wanting in critical powers of logic and reason and scientific attitude of mind and, on the other, have been and are ruled by imagination and dominated by blind faith. *Nay, Reason, Logic and Science are tabooed in the domain of religion.* The so-called religion itself is based on blind faith. This utterly harmful blind faith co-operating with uncontrolled fancy of man has led men straight away into the jaws of untruth. Such enslaved souls have a horror of test being applied to their various beliefs. They know that scientific test would shake the very foundation of their so-called religious beliefs which are nothing but fibs. Hence all that they want is mere belief or blind faith and not truth. They think and feel that this blind faith and untruth work as potent factors for the success in their individual life and in the life of society. "There is no God," they say, "but we have to create one in order to control the masses." They find morbid satisfaction in this attitude of mind and line of conduct. How painful!

What is the difference between true knowledge and love of truth? A question may arise here that *when a man is dominated by the love of untruth, how is it that he possesses true knowledge in one or other department of Nature?* Let us hasten to reply that *true knowledge and love of truth are not one and the same thing. Love of truth leads to true knowledge, but true knowledge does not lead to love of truth.* Leaving out certain insane persons there is hardly a man all over the globe who does not possess external and internal normal senses and hence does not get some true knowledge of things and individuals around him. Even animals possess some of these senses and obtain true knowledge through them. But it would be ridiculous to assert on the basis of all this, that all these men and animals possess love of truth. As animals do possess some elementary knowledge even in the absence of the progressive mental forces which have evolved in man, so millions of human beings all over the world do get this or that kind of true knowledge, though they are devoid of the various progressive forces of the love of truth. Some fortunate souls have, however, got the privilege of growing love for true knowledge in one or other department of Nature. But *complete love of truth and nothing but truth in all its phases* could evolve only in the soil of a heart which possessed the heredity of growing such powers. The knowledge that this is my house and that is my farm; this is my father and that is my child; this is iron and that is brass; this is wheat and that is barley; this is milk and that is water; this is cow and that is bullock; this is horse and that is ass; this is a book and that is a slate, etc., is open to all men who are in normal condition and possess various senses. But this does not predicate even *love for true knowledge*, not to say anything of the *love of truth*. Again where can we

find a man who, every hour of the day sings a song and vibrates with a longing that he may know facts and truths in Nature *as they are*? How is it possible for such a true longing (to know the facts as they are) to blossom in a heart which is not only void of love of truth but is dominated by low-loves and low-hates that lead him to positive untruth and which forces find happiness or profit in paying homage to and accepting the lead of falsehood?

(4)

The next question is: "What congenial heart or suitable soil of soul is then necessary for the evolution of the various powers of complete and all-sided love of truth and complete and all-sided repulsion or hatred for untruth?" In reply we have to say that that soul alone can evolve these unique loves and these highest repulsions who, having been born with hereditary germs of these powers,

(1) is absolutely free from all forms of slavery to all kinds of low-loves and low hates;

(2) has awakened in his heart complete consciousness regarding the evolution and dissolution of the organism of soul;

(3) has awakened true and full desire for the highest evolution of soul, and has realised soul evolution as the supreme object of his life and who is able enough to pursue and realise that goal under all circumstances

(4) realises fully and completely the great principle that the light which reveals the entire philosophy of soul—its evolution and dissolution, its supreme ideal, etc.—can be generated only by search after truth and truth alone in various Cosmic relations; and that the assimilating and absolute pursuit of truth and truth alone can be productive of true goodness.

We can hence see that though it is possible for normal man to acquire true knowledge in one or other department of Nature, it is not possible for love of truth to evolve in any soul who does not fulfil the above condition.

In Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul all these and other necessary conditions were fulfilled. He himself says, "Owing to my special spiritual heritage I came into this world possessed of a unique heart. I possessed the full capacity of evolving all *Satwik* (altruistic) and *Dev Shakties* (highest divine forces) which lead to the completion of soul-organism. My intellectual powers also possessed a potentiality of extraordinary capacity which could quite efficiently co-operate with unique heart forces. Hence when a powerful feeling of love for knowledge evolved in me and it impelled me to become studious, my intellectual powers responded fully to the demand made on them, both at the time of reflecting over the acquired ideas, sifting, sorting and analysing the stored up facts and at the time of discovering any great principle underlying them. Within a short time I became extremely critical in my judgments and views and all these powers of criticism were yoked to the

service of the love of truth. The dominating force which practically swayed my intellect was not any low-love for money, name, fame, popular applause, self or any other low-love of jealousy, vindictiveness, vanity, etc.—the last group never sprouted in my soul at any time—but the chief controlling force of my life was the love of truth. Love of matters relating to higher religion appeared in predominant form in me even during the period of my childhood. No other desire force or love was so strong as to overcome that love. All these heart and intellect forces formed my unique capital to begin life with.”

Being swayed by low loves and low-hates man feels helpless to remain under the pall of soul-darkness and a slave to false beliefs in the domain of true religion. Various kinds of teachings and beliefs that go under the name of religion are not all true. More often than not they are mutually contradictory and definitely conflicting. Even devotees of the same sect hold antagonistic views upon the same religion. This condition of things has existed for centuries. Millions are following one or other belief but they seem to feel no anxiety to find out the truth for themselves. Untruth prevails all around them. They themselves believe easily refutable falsehoods and pass their lives well contented and happy. Their ideals are low and hence untrue; their beliefs are false; their theories are false; they indulge in falsehood in thought and speech; they live a life of sin and thus develop abnormal love of or harmony with falsehood. In this condition of soul-life, is it possible for them to ever wish for true knowledge or true light respecting their soul-life and all the beliefs relating to it? The utmost scope of their activities is in their soul blindness strictly confined to the keeping of body and soul together and the gratification of some low-desires and low-passions called low-loves and low-hates. Hence acquisition of true knowledge respecting their own soul-life and its higher evolution does not and cannot form any item in the programme of their lives. They are content to live in absolute darkness respecting their soul and its good or bad courses of life. They are lamentably indifferent to the serious problems of soul-life. This darkness and this indifference causes them no uneasiness whatsoever. How very extremely painful!

There is no gainsaying the fact that evolution of man in Nature is a great miracle. But so long as man is ruled by such heart forces (low-loves and low-hates) which drag him to untruth, his condition is extremely deplorable. In that case he cannot avoid the path of untruth and cannot follow the path of truth. The path of untruth cannot but degenerate and harm the soul-life of man. Untruth is not a food for soul. It is a veritable poison. Hence every man who is lover of untruth is most pitiable—be he a Raja or Maharaja, commander-in-chief or a leader, cultured or uncultured, degree holder or a title holder, etc. As it is impossible for a man to breathe without lungs, in the same way it is impossible for a man to evolve highest psychic light without various psychic powers of

the love of truth. As sun light or other-lights are needed to dispel outer darkness, so is the highest psychic light evolved by various forces of love of truth indispensably needed to dispel ignorance, and darkness relating to soul-life.

(6)

Mental enlightenment is a great blessing. But as even highest intellectual capacity is absolutely incapable of liberating man from low-loves and low-hates—and is it not true that many of the highest intellects are ruled by mammon, lust, ego-worship, etc.?—in the same way it is *incapable of leading man to the path of Truth*. Such souls being slaves to the acquired or cherished false beliefs or superstitions and various low-loves and low-hates very often consciously even uphold untruth and propagate it to subserve the ends of their false beliefs or low-loves and thus deepen the darkness of their own soul-life.

How blessed then is He for himself and humanity who has appeared in the course of man's evolution with a unique heredity of the forces of love of truth and hatred for untruth, and who in suitable conditions has evolved these various highest divine powers and hath thereby produced in himself the unique psychic light which dispels all soul-life, showing its nature, its evolution, its dissolution, its supreme ideal, etc.

The various forces of love of truth which have gradually evolved into completion in this unique master soul—the Bhagwan Dev Atma,—and the nature of the drama that they have enacted in his life—the description whereof will be the burden of this part and others—are as follows :—

- (१) सत्य भाषण अनुराग
- (२) सत्यगत स्पष्ट कथन अनुराग
- (३) सत्य ज्ञान उपार्जन अनुराग
- (४) सत्य ग्रहण अनुराग
- (५) सत्य प्रतिज्ञा पालन अनुराग
- (६) सत्य प्रचार अनुराग
- (७) सत्य समर्थन अनुराग
- (८) धर्म विषयक सत्य अन्वेषण अनुराग

1. Love of speaking the Truth.
2. Love for speaking clear and unambiguous Truth.
3. Love for acquiring true knowledge.
4. Love for assimilating the Truth.
5. Love for the fulfilment of true pledges or engagements.
6. Love for the propagation of Truth.
7. Love for espousing the Truth loyally under all circumstances and at all costs.

8. Love for investigation of Truth in the domain of Religion.

1. LOVE OF TRUTH SPEAKING.

Bhagwan Dev Atma came to Lahore in the month of November, 1873. He believed then in the Vedantic philosophy as true. He had learnt it at the feet of his revered *Guru*, Rishi Shiv Dayal Singhji at Rookee. He also possessed unquestioning faith in God as the Creator of this universe. He had given up his beliefs in all those numberless gods and goddesses which every orthodox Hindu believes as real. He had also abjured various false rites and ceremonies which are current among orthodox Hindus. He had renounced all such usages and observances which were false and which claimed their birth from the greed and fancy of the priestly class which had exercised their dwarfing sway over Hindu minds for centuries. The one book that appealed to him then was *Shrimad Bhagwat*. It was also his daily and fixed programme to perform various devotional exercises such as reciting *astotaras*, reading of sacred scriptures, offering of prayers, worship, etc. As he had developed the masterful and unique love for goodness and complete hatred for evil, he could not give up what purported, according to his accepted beliefs, to do good to his soul. Hence his professions and practices were harmoniously blended. He followed whatever he believed to be good and he renounced without counting the cost whatever he believed to be wrong. This remained as an unbroken and undeviating course of his conduct throughout his life. Hence those who came in contact with him at any stage of his life, trusted him implicitly whether they were friends or foes. His students and his officers, his colleagues and his caste-men, and various others who had any dealings with him implicitly believed in his word.

The influences of his revered *Guruji* had developed one glorious higher force in him, *i. e.*, love for speaking the truth. How this beautiful but a rare trait grew in him is thus described by Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“ I was hardly twenty years and six months of age when, along with my wife, I got myself initiated as disciple of my *Guru*. We both had deep reverence for him. We had full faith in his teachings. Every one of his words appealed to us as sacred and worth following. His commands we received with joy and fulfilled them with an eager heart. It was in this frame of mind that a few days before initiating us, he wrote and sent to us a certain instruction for our benefit which among other things contained the following injunction :—

‘ Never speak an untruth even though you may have to suffer any amount of trouble or loss for speaking the truth.’

“ On the one hand our hearts were in a fit state to assimilate these teachings and on the other our *Guru* was himself a lover of truth-speaking and possessed complete hatred for speaking an untruth. Hence his words possessed a living force. Having infused

in our hearts the living influence of this real love, he developed in us love for speaking the truth and hatred against speaking falsehood. This was the first and primary force of love of truth which developed in me and my wife at that time. This was indeed a most valuable force. This marked the beginning of the evolution in my soul of all those various constituents of love of truth which along with the love of goodness and the hatred for evil were to evolve that most blessed, unique and complete soul-life which Nature had meant to bless me with."

"No man likes to endure trouble in life or to suffer any loss. Why did then our *Guru* ask us to face every trouble and bear up with every loss but never to speak an untruth? Being a well-wisher of his soul our *Guru* possessed at that time at least this much consciousness that those who indulge in untruth in order to save themselves from worldly trouble or loss do unavoidably harm their soul-life. Hence *one who wishes good of his soul should never speak an untruth whatever may be the risk or trouble involved in that conduct.* We did wish the good of our souls. Hence his words went home to our heart and awakened in us hatred against speaking falsehood. The awakening of this force led us to be cautious in our speech. A habit of speaking the truth grew and developed in us. Sometimes our *Guruji* used to read to us a beautiful couplet of *Tulsi Das* which is as under :—

“सत्य वचन आधीनता, पर त्रिय मात समान ;
इतने में हरि न मिलें, तो तुलसीदास जमान ।”

Translation.—I stand guarantee, if truth, humility and maintaining a mental attitude of considering women other than your wife as mothers, do not secure your union with God."

Those who can understand the mentality of persons who speak untruth, would be able to realise the uniqueness of even this one phase of the love of truth. To speak the truth even when loss or trouble faces you demands a very high and elevated condition of heart.

At Roorkee Bhagwan could make no further progress in this respect because the environmental stimuli were absent there which could awaken various other constituents of unique force of the love of truth in Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul.

2. UNAMBIGUOUS TRUTH SPEAKING.

Though love for speaking truth and hatred against speaking untruth had grown into a mighty motive force in Bhagwan's life at Roorkee, this love would have lost half its charm and more than half its glory if it had been confined merely to the letter and not to the full spirit of truth speaking. There are some rare persons who seem anxious to speak the truth but even those few are not always jealous of speaking what they mean and mean what they speak. They use language which is true enough but it is not transparent and frank enough to reveal their full meaning.

These words rather help to conceal their thoughts. In the great Hindu epic *Mahabharat*, one of the Pandvas under the guidance of Sri Krishna spoke words true enough but which carried absolutely different meaning. A hero fighting on the opposite side and an elephant bore the same name. It was the elephant that was dead. But the great Pandva through the persuasion of Sri Krishna was induced to announce the death of the elephant in a way that it carried the sense that the hero bearing that name was dead. This insincere statement was indulged in to bring about the death of the father of that hero who was himself a great hero. It was clear to those trafficking in this dangerous game that the news of the death of his son would cause the death of the father, a more invincible opponent.

Among the learned Pandits of our land an honourable pride is claimed for distorting the true meaning of texts and giving several clever but false interpretations of a clear context. In the issue of September 1919 a short life sketch of Maha Mahopadhyaya Pandit Mahesh Chandra Niya Ratan, C. I. E., appeared in the columns of the Hindi monthly *Saraswati*. In the course of this biographical sketch the learned biographer wrote about Niya Ratan :—

“Once some errors crept into the Sanskrit selection which he had compiled for the matriculation candidates. Several critics exposed those errors. Niya Ratan wrote a rejoinder under the title of the ‘*Prakrit Katha*’. In this little volume he proved his errors to be true statements.”

“This line of conduct or practice prevails in our land since days of yore. It has been the special pride or unique feature of Bharat that our learned Pandits in order to keep up their reputation for high learning proved fallacies to be right thought. “*Saraswati Viyakaran*” is the living illustration of this trait in our land. Niya Ratan was a child of Bharat which valued this feature. If he therefore indulged in this trait, he committed no offence or did no wrong.”

Hence if love for speaking the truth is to shine bright and undimmed by the fog of insincerity it ought to be accompanied by the *Sapashat Kathan anurag* (i. e., love for clear and unambiguous expressions which carry the absolutely true spirit along with the true words). This love when awakened enables a man to state the truth as it is, with all the sincerity of expression and with no tinge of hypocrisy.

The absence of this great psychic force in mankind along with the sway, on its heart, of low-loves and low-hates has led it to hypocrisy in various forms and guises. Even the great leaders and founders of various faiths have been betrayed into dark alleys and even thoroughfares of falsehood, because of the absence of this great force in them. It has often happened that when any man has undergone some radical change in his beliefs, and he has felt that he is not able to agree with those around him, he has not made a clean and unvarnished admission but has taken shelter under hypocrisy. He

has availed himself of words and phrases which help to conceal the real meaning of the change in him and given an impression to the world that his beliefs and of the world around him were not at all at variance. *It is expediency and not sincerity that seems to rule the mankind.* The present interpreters of the old world faiths are as a rule guilty of this most dangerous and towering weakness. They distort texts and put new wine into old bottles and thus give a false lead and create any amount of evil in the world.

Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed not only love for speaking the truth but evolved equally mighty love for sincerity. This brought him in violent conflict with the world as it was and is constituted of persons in whom sincerity in their words and deeds is almost absent. Bhagwan Dev Atma writes in his Autobiography, Part I:—

“The evolution of these constituents of love of truth not only made it hard for me to deal with persons around me who were devoid of them and led to great conflict with them and loss of peace of my mind, but it made it difficult for me to wade through the pages of various so-called sacred scriptures full as they are of myths and fictions. With all my desire to go through them to the end I could not finish them from beginning to end in certain cases.”

3. LOVE FOR TRUE KNOWLEDGE.

As already mentioned in Chapter XXI of Part III of this book, association with Babu Navin Chandra Roy (who on his own part felt an equally strong attraction for him) and breathing in the new and bracing atmosphere study, reflection, discussion, open and unrestricted expression of views on diverse important subjects, awakened in Bhagwan.

- (1) Deep and lasting interest in all kinds of true knowledge ;
- (2) Love for reading all such books, journals and other literary productions which dealt with religious, social and political problems ;
- (3) Contemplative and reflective mental disposition which made him shun all surface knowledge and go to the roots of the questions which formed the subject matter of study ; and
- (4) Avidity and open mind for exchange of views on all matters of general interest.

This awakening led Bhagwan Dev Atma—

- (a) to engage the services of a Pandit who daily gave him lessons in the Sanskrit language ;
- (b) to study further and promote the knowledge of English language with the help of an enlightened English educated gentleman ;
- (c) to read all such papers and journals in Hindi, Urdu and English which he could get ;
- (d) to study Bengali unaided and all by himself in order to study, from the original sources, productions of eminent leaders of Brahmo Samaj in Bengali and other Bengali literature.

This powerful force of seeking true knowledge made Bhagwan an irrepressible and humble student in the temple of knowledge. He was posted as a Drawing Master in the Government High School at Lahore. There was a small library of the school which was all contained in one almirah only. Bhagwan was attracted to it and began to get books from it and study them. The one book which appealed to him most and considerably impressed his mind was Buckle's *History of Civilisation in England*. The first serious volume on Ethics and Philosophy which touched his heart, was Comte's *Moral Philosophy*. Brahmo Samaj literature he loved to read. He studied Bengali with the definite object of reading Brahmo Samaj literature in that language, as Bengal was the home of Brahmo Samaj. Some of the Brahmo books which he deeply appreciated in those days and which exercised great influence on his mind were the following:—(1) *Dharm Vigyan*. (2) *Shalok Sangrah*. (3) *Hindu Dharm Niti*. (4) *Brahm Dharm*. (5) *Jagatar Balya Ithas* (translation of an English book, *Childhood of the World*). The last book appealed to him the most. Once the love for seeking true knowledge grew in Bhagwan, it dominated him and became an unconquerable psychic motive force in him. It made him a thorough-going and progressive seeker of all such knowledge as led him to truth. He remained a profound student all his life.

4. LOVE FOR ASSIMILATING THE TRUTH.

To seek true knowledge is one thing and to assimilate and accept it even when it demolishes one's own dearly cherished and treasured beliefs and practices is quite a different thing. There are persons who are anxious and determined to keep to their own pet theories and beliefs, and study Science and Literature, not with the object of finding out how far their theories and beliefs can stand the searchlight of truth, but they gather only such knowledge out of it as can even most remotely support their wrong views. These people can seek knowledge and gain reputation for great learning and be even remembered as learned men but they can never be called lovers of truth.

Hence along with the blessed psychic force of seeking and acquiring true knowledge which made Bhagwan an humble but profound student of all such literature as shed light on social, political and religious problems, he developed a very powerful psychic force of assimilating and accepting the truth *at any cost*. With the growth of this unique trait of higher love his one, all-absorbing and dominating desire was not only to correctly and sincerely describe to others his own beliefs, opinions and ideas and face any trouble which his frank avowal may create for him, but to reflect on his own cherished beliefs and professions and bring them under the searching criticism of reason and facts and to reject all that his own light and sound criticism may show him to be false or mythical and to assimilate and accept only that which may prove to be true. *To sit on judgment on one's own dearly loved theories and accepted doctrines with a mind*

detached from all bias and to keep an open mind for the light of truth to enter when such a light even threatens to demolish them, *speaks undoubtedly of an extraordinary elevated mind*—a mind wonderfully tuned to truth and bound for life's true destination and most beneficial ideal.

The one constant prayer of Bhagwan Dev Atma's heart when this unique psychic force of assimilating truth grew and developed in him was the one which we would better express in his own blessed words from his Hindi Autobiography Part I:—

“ May my capacity to apprehend the truth grow and flourish in me. May I be able to know truth and accept it. May the capacity to see and discriminate untruth and also to totally abjure it develop more and more in me. May each one of my beliefs be consistent with truth and none of them have any shade of untruth.”

Bhagwan's capacity for assimilating and accepting the truth waxed mighty strong in him. This was dominated by this singular love. His one deep and silent prayer as said above was for homage of his heart to truth and nothing but truth. The one great factor of progress in any line is to possess a corresponding irrepressible feeling for it. Such a feeling always makes the life of one dominated by it quite uncomfortable, so long as he does not make every possible effort to crush down all obstacles and to gratify it. Passion for gambling has led gamblers to stake even wife and kingdom. Such is the drama enacted by every masterful love—high or low. Those who have ever observed and studied the nature of masterful low-loves or any higher-love, can by a stretch of imagination understand what a masterful love for accepting truth can demand from a soul which it dominates.

Within a short time, therefore, a vast change was effected in Bhagwan's beliefs and professions.

When he came to Lahore he was a devout Vedantist. He had given up faith in various gods and goddesses and all belief in idol-worship. He treasured in his heart the belief in one God as the Creator of all this phenomenal world. Before leaving Roorkee he had abjured all those numberless unmeaning or evil rites and usages which owed their birth to the manufactory of the priestly brain and which were the current creeds of people for centuries past.

But the awakening in him of the higher psychic forces of love for seeking truth and love for accepting and assimilating it caused a great revolution in his beliefs. He came to believe—

1. That the Being who is called the Creator of this Universe and Omniscient and all-good is alone the one unique personality or *Brahm* or God.

2. That he personally was not a *Brahm* nor was any other person, plant or animal, *Brahm* or God.

3. That *Brahm* never incarnated as man or animal. The belief in the incarnation of God was false.

4. That God never holds a court or *darbar* like a human king or emperor on any special or appointed day. The belief in the day of judgment was a huge myth.

5. That God does not listen to recommendation or intercession. He does not take revenge. The belief in any prophet, etc., being a mediator between man and God was a false belief.

6. That God has revealed no book beyond and apart from the Book of Nature. All books are man-made.

7. That Vedantic philosophy was untrue and deceptive.

8. That none gets or can get salvation from sins by a dip in any river or any waters or by taking a sip out of them.

9. That none gets or can get salvation from sins by visiting a place of pilgrimage and having an ocular vision of any idol kept there or by residing in that place.

10. That good and evil deeds bear their natural fruit. But the theory of transmigration propounded by Hindus according to which we reap in the present life fruits of the deeds committed by us in previous births is a huge myth.

11. That many distinctions that prevail in Hindu society regarding food, marriage, profession, etc., etc. are false and most harmful.

12. That the custom of infant marriage or child marriage is a most pernicious custom.

13. That as the remarriage of a widower is not improper in all circumstances, so a widow remarriage is also not wrong under all circumstances. In many cases remarriages by widows and widowers are proper and beneficial for both.

14. That both men and women possess equal rights to have equal opportunities for intellectual advancement and progress in soul-life.

15. That many of the social rites and customs prevalent in society are false and harmful, etc., etc.

Thus Bhagwan underwent a tremendous change in his beliefs and opinions and gave up several false usages, customs, rites and ceremonies which were believed in as true and followed by millions of his own countrymen and others. But his belief in one God which he had imbibed in his childhood not only remained with him as a true and living faith and no doubts arose in his mind about it, but it was strengthened and deepened in the environments in which he breathed.

5. LOVE FOR RIGHT ENGAGEMENTS.

Within a few short months Bhagwan rose like a star on the firmament of public life in the Punjab. All eyes were turned to him as the coming man. His singular life made a deep impression on others. The one thing that was eminently striking in his character was the unbroken fidelity in every-day life to his beliefs and

professions and practices. His inside thought and outside behaviour were never at variance. If he gave up any belief his entire life illustrated it. If he set his back against any usage, he never compromised with it under any circumstances and was all along undismayed by any fear of opposition or persecution or even the dread of ex-communication or any worldly loss or harm.

Besides this another singular fact that began to strike those that came in contact with him was his absolute fidelity to all public or private engagements. The love of truth that was unfolding in him in various phases and the love of goodness that had already grown into mighty motive force of his conduct made it utterly impossible for him to break any right engagement; as the breach of every right engagement was not only calculated to make him false—a position which he abhorred—but also to produce evil at which his entire being tremendously revolted. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma in the part first of his Hindi Autobiography:—

“The fifth constituent of the love of truth which evolved in me was *Satya Pritigya Palan Anurag* (i.e., love for fulfilling all right engagements). This love made it imperative on me to abide by all such engagements or promises, which I undertook to perform in relation to various persons as long as I was not convinced of their being wrong or sinful, and never let any other consideration to stand in the way. Besides this it also became imperative on me to be true to time engagements, i.e., if I undertook to do anything for any one within a specified time or if it was expected of me to do a certain thing within a certain fixed time, I should not only do it but do it within time. Suppose I have promised to see Rama at 3 p. m. on any appointed day or am expected to attend any meeting at 7 p. m. for which one Sham has given me due notice and at which my attendance is proper and necessary, I would not only see Rama and attend the meeting but do so before the *appointed time*, unless and until it became impossible for me to do so on account of some great mishap. Both these forces (i.e., sticking to right engagements and fulfilling them in right time) regulated my conduct completely. I have always remained true to all right engagements. Whenever I have in my daily life, entered into any engagement with any of my own family members, or any member of my society or any other person from amongst the public and whenever I have undertaken to do any job, I have not only stood by my promises, but have fulfilled my engagements and promises within time and done my jobs to a finish. If I had to see any one at 3 p. m. and to attend any meeting at 7 p. m., if I had to make any payment on Tuesday and send a reply to a letter of any person on Wednesday, I always took 3 p. m. for 3 p. m., and 7 p. m. for 7 p. m., and Tuesday and Wednesday as Tuesday and Wednesday. I could never consider 3 p. m. as identical to 3-15 p. m. or 3-30 p. m. or 4 p. m. and Tuesday as good as Saturday. I have never been able to understand the arithmetic of thousands of my own countrymen which they call Indian time,

and equate 4 p.m. to 4-15 p.m., 4-30 p.m. or even 5 p.m. I have all along endeavoured my absolute best to be true to time and complete my engagements and promises within the time and on the appointed day. No consideration of bodily comfort, happiness or any other such temptation, no desire force, no propensity, no voice of self and no thought of any other thing has ever succeeded in influencing me to prove false to my time engagements and other promises.

"Nay even when I have *undertaken in my own mind* to finish any task which is personal to me within any fixed period, I have put in all my might to complete that within that time."

Bhagwan Dev Atma held thousands of public and private meetings for the propagation of his life mission, and visited and was visited by any number of persons in his life. There is not a single case when it could be said that Bhagwan proved untrue to his promise or was late even on a single occasion. Such a fidelity to all promises and all time engagements is absolutely a unique phenomenon in human world and hardly met with in our land. There is not a single political leader of even the greatest eminence in our land about whom it may be said that he observes complete fidelity to time engagements. We had had ourselves the bitterest experience of how it has become a practice for the great leaders to break time engagements. Almost on all occasions they are late even when they are to preside or are the main speakers at any public meeting. It is a rare sight for any of them to have even the courtesy to express any regret for their late coming. Some of them even defend their indefensible position by a hoax that they are very busy people and the public should thank them that they are at least able to come there. This only reveals the utter absence of any love for keeping all right engagements.

The absence of this essential force has made breach of the solemn promises by man in relation to man as a matter of course. The tailor makes spacious promises which he knows he will not fulfil. The washerman does the same. The blacksmith, the copper-smith, the goldsmith, the carpenter, the coolie, the clerk in office, the shop-keeper—almost all—daily indulge in the breach of the most solemn pledges. Not to say of promises by word of mouth, there are thousands and hundreds of thousands who deny execution of even written, registered, duly sealed and witnessed documents. Even great statesmen and rulers of vast kingdoms treat their solemn written pledges as a "scrap of paper" worthy of waste paper basket. With not so much as a second thought they cast them to winds or at the most put absolutely forced and distorted interpretation on them, in order to make a show of fulfilling the letter and killing the spirit of their engagements. Alas! what an utter callousness prevails in this respect and what a scant courtesy is displayed by general man towards plighted oral or written word.

"It has sometimes happened," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "that

I have needed the help and co-operation of others in completing some task within a specified time. But when I have seen such person or persons trying by their habits of procrastination under the influence of some lower feeling, to thwart me or make it difficult for me to abide by my promise and fulfil it within time, I have felt simply tortured and my blood has literally boiled in my veins. My entire being has felt a supreme anxiety to be true to my engagement, while these persons by their ignoble conduct have wished to shunt me off from the track of truth.....But I have never given these low people the satisfaction of leading me astray and by the power of my love for truth, have all along proved true to my word."

"They alone who have been living with or near me can form some estimate of what it has cost me on such occasions to keep faithful to my right engagements. They know how at times I had to put forth phenomenal effort not only to crush down the lethargy of my so-called helpers or the obstructions raised by them against my right promises but also to overcome other unforeseen obstacles and adverse circumstances."

How many in the past and how many in the present can be honestly said to have never broken a time engagement or any right engagement in relation to any person, nay, even those made with themselves. *Such a thorough-going or complete fidelity could be a characteristic of none in the world but a Dev Atma.*

May we humbly seek for the light which may show us the resplendent glory of this unique character force and bow our heart in adoration to the possessor of it.

6. LOVE FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF TRUTH.

To assimilate truth is one thing and to propagate it is another. To assimilate truth demands one higher psychic force but to propagate it requires quite a different psychic power. It is not necessary that one who accumulates wealth, may also give it away in charity. It is not necessary that the collector of rare books or rare curiosities may feel a strong desire to throw both of them open for the good of mankind. Similarly to assimilate truth is not tantamount to a strong feeling to propagate it. If both these psychic forces had been identical and not different, we would have had as many missionaries as we have disciples of any great mind. There are hundreds and thousands of students who graduate in one or other branch of scientific knowledge. And yet we hardly come across even one per cent disseminating the truths assimilated by them. There have been examples of hundreds of Indian physicians who discovered some great specifics for one or other disease which were very efficacious and yet instead of propagating them for the good of the world they carried them to their grave.

In social, moral, political and the so-called soul-welfare societies, we find the same thing. There are thousands among our countrymen who have been sufficiently enlightened to realise that several social

customs rampant in Hindu society (*viz.*, caste system, enforced widowhood, extravagant expenses, untouchability, etc.) are utterly wrong and most pernicious. But yet how many among them use their pen and tongue to propagate their views. Bhagwan Dev Atma has flooded this our planet with most precious gems of truths of unique importance for every man and there are hundreds if not thousands who have at one time or another or for all life realised their beauty, glory and absolute usefulness for mankind, and yet how many propagate them by pen or by word of mouth? Very few. This is the case with all the various branches of human knowledge.

Bhagwan Dev Atma not only evolved the most unique force of assimilating the truth at any cost, but he quickly developed the unique psychic force of propagating it. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“When with the growth of reflection, critical judgment and power of logical reasoning and by study, remarkable change took place in my beliefs and professions, and my heart, realising the fascinating beauty of truth, felt a great impulse to express its glory and to raise a voice of the strongest protest against untruth, I developed the sixth constituent of love of truth, *i.e.*, love for propagating it. The altruistic forces of sympathy for others and unselfish service of them had already blossomed in my soul. Hence when I witnessed all around thousands and lacs of human beings entangled in the meshes of false beliefs, false dogmas, false creeds and evil social customs, usages and ceremonies, my heart was deeply stirred, and I felt an irrepressible feeling to carry to them as much light of truth as I had been able myself to get. Motivated by these feelings I started in June 1875 two journals, one in Hindi and the other in Urdu. Besides writing in their columns, I started propagating truth by holding public or congregational meetings. It was in that very year that I delivered my maiden speech in “Sat Sabha”, inside Lohari Gate, in which I, in corroboration of my speech, read many quotations from the Hindu *Shastras*. It was perhaps in the same year that I became a member of the Brahmo Samaj. By being appointed its minister also, I began holding prayer meetings and delivering sermons in the Brahmo *Mandir*. Gradually my scope for these activities widened and I delivered sermons and lectures from other platforms and in other stations.”

“The first book named *Sattya Mahma Pradarshak*, that I wrote and published, was in glory of truth. In this book I had supported my theme by copious collection of quotations from Hindu scriptures which directly related to the glory of truth.”

Some of these quotations are given below as specimen :—

“सत्यमेव जयते नाऽनृतम् ।”

Translation.—Truth alone triumphs and not falsehood.

योऽन्यथा सन्तमात्मानमन्यथ प्रतिपद्यते;

कितेन न कृतं पापं चौरैणात्मापहारिण ।”

(महाभारत । आदि । ७४ । ३०१४ ।)

Translation.—What sin is there in the world which that thief of soul-life cannot commit who tries to pose himself before others what he in fact is not, (*i. e.*, a hypocrite).

नास्ति सत्यसमो धर्मो, न सत्याद्विद्यत परम्;
नहि तीव्रतरं किञ्चिद् नृतादिह विद्यते ।
(म० । आदि । ७४ । ३०६७ ।)

Translation.—There is no religion higher than truth, hence there is nothing superior to truth. In this world there is nothing more dreadful or horrible than falsehood.

सत्ये कृत्वा प्रतिष्ठान्तु, प्रवर्तन्ते प्रवृत्तयः;
सत्यमेव गरीयस्तु, शिष्टाचार निषेवितः ।
(म० । वन० । २०६ । १३७५७ ।)

Translation.—It is the duty of man to regulate all his desire forces on the basis of truth, because truth is the noblest object with all civilised and higher people.

आत्मज्ञानं परं ज्ञानम्, सत्यवृत्तं परं व्रतम्,
सत्यस्य वचनं श्रयः सत्ये ज्ञाने हितं भवेत् ।
यद्भूत हितमत्यन्तं, तद्वै सत्यं परं मतम् ।
(म० । वन० । २५८ । १३६८० ।)

Translation.—Soul-knowledge is supreme knowledge; vow of truth is supreme vow, truth speaking is good, thus true knowledge alone is beneficial. All such supreme truth is worth knowing, which is calculated to do highest good to all living beings.

सत्यं ब्रह्म तपः सत्यं, सत्यं विसृजते प्रजाः,
सत्येन धार्यते लोकाः, स्वर्गं सत्येन गच्छति ।
(म० । शा० । १६० । ६६६८ ।)

Translation.—Truth alone is *Brahm* or God; truth alone is *tapasia* or asceticism; truth alone is the maker of all living beings. All worlds are based on truth. Hence by truth alone man enters the paradise.

तस्मात्सत्यं व्रताचारः, सत्ययोग परायणः ;
सत्यकामः समोदान्तः, सत्येनैवान्तकं जयेत् ।
(म० । शा० । १७५ । ६६५५१ ।)

Translation.—Therefore act always in consonance with Truth, develop ability to follow truth; by true deeds, impartiality, and conquest of lower passions conquer death by truth alone.

न हि सत्यात्परो धर्मो, न पापमनृतान्परम्;
तस्मात्सर्वात्मना मर्त्यः सत्यमेकं समाश्रयेत् ।
सत्यहीना वृथा पूजा, सत्यहीनो वृथा जपः;

सत्यहीन तपो व्यर्थ, मूषरे वपनं यथा ।

× × × ×

सत्यमूलाः क्रियाः सर्वाः सत्यात्परवरं न हि ।

(महानिबार्णं तन्त्रम् । ४७० । ३ ।)

Translation.—There is no religion higher than truth, there is no sin worse than untruth, therefore with singleness of heart find shelter in truth. All worship is vain, all *jap* (repeating *mantars* or names) is vain without truth and all religious penances void of truth are useless like sowing seed in barren land. Nothing is higher than truth and true deeds.

सत्यमेव व्रतं यस्य, दया दीनेषु सर्वदा;

कामक्रोधौ वशौ यस्य, तेन लोक त्रयं जितम् ।

(महानि० । ८ । ६७ ।)

Translation.—He has conquered all the three worlds who is wedded to nothing but truth, has mercy for the poor, and control over lust and anger.

Besides these quotations from Hindu religious scriptures which Bhagwan selected in praise of truth which he loved, he had himself composed certain mottos which he published in his journal *Biradar-i-Hind* "in bold type in glory of truth. We give here one or two of these :—

“रास्ती को ढूँढो, रास्ती को प्यार करो, रास्ती की तकलीद करो,
रास्ती को अमल में लाओ ।”

(जनवरी सन १८७६ के सरवरक पर)

Translation.—Seek truth, love truth, follow truth, practise truth. (Title page for January, 1879.)

“सिदाकत की हि फ़तह है, झूठ की नहीं। सिदाकत को ढूँढो,
सिदाकत को प्यार करो, सिदाकत की तकलीद करो, सिदाकत को
अमल में लाओ ।”

(जुलाई १८८० के सरवरक पर)

Translation.—Truth alone triumphs and not falsehood. Hence seek truth, love truth, follow truth and practise truth. (Title page for July 1880.)

Thus both by pen and word of mouth, Bhagwan threw himself heart and soul in propagating truth. As he was the sincerest lover of truth and his life accorded with his preachings, the cause of truth substantially gained by his advocacy. As his words—spoken or written—issued from heart charged with power, his audience used to feel inspired. Similarly his readers used to feel the living power of his pen.

Bhagwan continued his Hindi journal for nineteen months and had to stop it for want of subscribers. But his Urdu journal *Biradar-i-Hind* continued for seven years. He started these journals not with any object of pecuniary gain. He conducted them for the public good from his own private funds. After this Urdu journal Bhagwan started a new paper called *Dharm Jiwan* which by and by developed into a weekly and continued for ten years. He also edited the "Reformer" for some time and *Qaumi Akhbar* for one year. After *Dharm Jiwan* Bhagwan started *Jiwan Path*, a Hindi journal of unique importance which lasted for eight years. Thereafter Bhagwan contributed any number of articles in the Urdu paper and Hindi journal of his own society called *Jiwan Tatva* and *Sewak*.

He did not confine his activities to merely editing journals. He was a voluminous writer. He wrote and compiled nearly 300 books and pamphlets and continued this work almost up to the last illness which led to his physical end.

Thus by publishing thousands of copies of not only these hundreds of books but of free pamphlets, and writing countless articles and conducting numberless congregational and public meetings, Bhagwan propagated truth for more than half a century with that zeal, that absolute devotion, that masterful vigour, that phenomenal energy and singleness of purpose, that utter self-abnegation which amazed and astonished not a few of his contemporaries, his friends and even his opponents, and caused not a little terror in the camps of those who had built their societies on hypocrisy and their religion on fraud and falsehood, while it liberated the minds of hundreds and thousands from falsehood and soul-darkness and produced a public opinion for independence of thought in all lines which is the greatest contribution of Bhagwan to the public life of the Punjab and other provinces.

7. LOVE FOR ESPOUSING THE TRUTH.

To propagate truth which is pleasant, which accords with the public temper, which is popular or which is the rage of the times, which follows the line of least resistance and thus demands no sacrifice, may fall to the lot of several persons. There are and have been social reformers, political propagandists and public men of various shades and grades, who have at one or other time caught a glimpse of some truth, appreciated it and even zealously advocated it from the public platform. Some of them have even served its cause by vigorous pen. Some have gone still further. By leading a magnificent agitation, they have moved the Legislature to pass an Act in defence of their truth. But when the occasion has risen which demanded from them the last price of a real devotee *i.e.*, practising it in their own life, they have failed. They have thus shown their weak spot in their moral armour. They have thereby betrayed truth. If the facts were collected, it would be found that more harm has been done to the cause of reform, progress and truth by those who publicly propagated it, than by those who were either

lukewarm or even its open enemies, because these public protagonists betrayed themselves and thus brought the cause of truth into ridicule. Distinguished men like Justice Ranade of Bombay and Poona, Babu Keshab Chander Sen of Calcutta, Dewan Dayaram Gidumal of Sind and several other notable personages gave a set-back (which for long, long times it would be difficult to recover) to the cause of truths they publicly espoused, because when the time came for them to practise it they deviated from those truths and left an example of life which hardly redounds to the glory of that truth. *Fall of a great personality* is viewed with greater pain because it is not a fall of a single person but of a cause.

We cannot therefore call him a lover of truth who zealously propagates either a popular truth or a truth which at the hour of trial he deserts. We cannot even call him a lover of truth if he rejects truth which threatens to demolish his cherished opinions, beliefs and modes of conduct. He alone deserves to be called a lover of truth who, besides accepting truth irrespective of any consideration—whether it accords with his acquired beliefs and modes of conduct or conflicts with them, whether it is truth of one's own land or of foreign origin, whether it is popular or unpopular—is *prepared to stand by it, at all costs*, and allows no temptation of any kind to lead him astray from its path, and who never deserts it whatever the risk. This courage to uphold the banner of truth, in the teeth of world opposition and with absolute fidelity amidst all forms of dangers, risks and temptations, is a necessary constituent of the love of truth.

As Bhagwan Dev Atma was lover of truth, he also developed that constituent of love of truth which is called *Satya Samarthan Anurag*. About the evolution of this trait in him, Bhagwan says :—

“It became imperative on me to uphold any truth, which I knew as truth, by everyone of my acts in my daily life, *i.e.*, on the one hand, to refrain absolutely from associating myself with any religious belief, which I knew to be false, any social custom, usage or rite which I came to know as opposed to truth, any form of daily manners which I believed to be void of truth and any kind of conduct in daily life which I found to be untrue; and on the other hand, to always associate myself fully with any truth, that I found, to be truth, in my own or any other nation's religion, traditions, beliefs, practices, rites, usages or general behaviour, and to stand by it. *In short my inner thoughts and beliefs and my external behaviour were to be in absolute unison and that I should never desert a truth that I knew as such, either under the temptation of bodily comfort, wealth, fame, name, etc., or through the fear of any of my family members, or community or society or the fear of calumny and slander at the hands of others and thus remain true and maintain utter fidelity to truth.*”

Such a form of devotion to truth had to take its own toll. Persons wedded to falsehood and those captivated by the policy of

hypocrisy scented a danger in this unique lover of truth. Bhagwan rightly remarks further on in this respect :—

“ A person who upholds, by every act of his daily life, every form of truth, and who definitely and emphatically disassociates himself from all kinds of false beliefs, rites, usages, ceremonies, etc., which he finds rampant in the world, has not only to be completely clean of all forms of insincerity or hypocrisy, but has to face the natural consequences of being a target of hatred, slander and abuse of all those thousands of persons who are devoid of this love and are enslaved to hypocrisy and other low forces. Again such persons could hardly tolerate me, who based the very system of their so-called religious faith and the policy of working it on rank hypocrisy, who laid down the propagation of their creed as a means to the earthly end of gaining worldly things and political power, and who, being utterly blind to the good side of the life of foreigners, considered their “ progress ” and the fulfilment of their object to lie in harming, by their various sinful deeds, such foreigners and such of their countrymen who held faiths other than their own. The extent to which such persons could look upon me with feelings of deep hatred and revenge and put forth indescribable efforts to persecute me and subject me to any amount of suffering can well be imagined.”

“ Being possessed by the love to stand by truth implicitly, I felt impelled, by the very necessity of my being, not only to appreciate every good quality that I could find in my own people, but also to associate myself with every noble trait that I found in the people of other races and countries. It had also become imperative for me to expose all such falsehood as I found in the religious beliefs etc., of not only my own caste or countrymen but also in those of the people of other creeds and other countries. But those persons who had built the very superstructure of their faith on hypocrisy and falsehood, and had made it an article of their faith, who envisaged the progress of their so-called religion, in demolishing the religious edifices of others—specially of the creeds of nations or people of other lands—even by preaching falsehood, could not bear that I should expose them in their true colours, and criticise their dreadful policy of falsehood and hypocrisy and uphold the noble national traits of foreigners. They therefore became my inveterate foes. But as it was natural for these people, in such condition of their heart, to become my enemies, it was also absolutely natural for me—being possessed of this unique love of upholding every truth—to stand by truth so far as it had dawned upon me, irrespective of any consideration of my own nation or country or of any other land or creed and similarly to criticise and expose every untruth wherever found.”

This unique psychic force made Bhagwan an absolutely fearless apostle of truth and uncompromising enemy of untruth. His entire public life, covering a period of over half a century, is replete with grand and illustrative instances of his undaunted advocacy of truth however unpopular, and of his readiness to suffer any trouble, risk,

harm or to undergo any form of sacrifice in the service of truth and in exposing untruth and falsehood. We confine ourselves here to one example of his unique life which would serve to illustrate the extent of his love.

Bhagwan had joined Brahmo Samaj in the year 1875. He worked as its minister and was ordained as its honorary missionary. During his life as a Brahmo, a commission was apponited, at the instance of the Managing Committee of Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta, to investigate and make a thorough enquiry into a charge that was laid at the door of a distinguished minister of Brahmo Samaj Pandit Vijay Krishan Goswami to the effect that he entertained some beliefs antagonistic to the beliefs of Brahmo Samaj. This commission finished the enquiry and submitted its report to the said Managing Committee. The Committee took exception to certain beliefs of the Goswami which it said were objectionable and disqualified the Goswami from holding any longer the position of a missionary of Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. This report was published in the Bengali organ of the Samaj *Tatwa Komadi* of Calcutta. Bhagwan read that report. He found that some of the beliefs, entertained by the Goswami, which had brought about his dismissal, were such as he himself believed to be correct. Now it was impossible for Bhagwan to keep silent. At once Bhagwan wrote a letter to the Goswami in which he upheld, in strongest possible terms, those beliefs which he then considered to be true. He further wrote that if he (the Goswami) was disqualified from being a missionary of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj because of those beliefs, he (the Bhagwan) too stood in the same category and he could not understand how he would be considered qualified, in view of those beliefs, to be retained as missionary of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Bhagwan sent a copy of this letter to the Managing Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj also. It is indeed curious that the Managing Committee, even after the receipt of copy of Bhagwan's letter, kept silent and took no action.

Throughout his life this unique trait of upholding the banner of truth at all costs remained the most prominent and unwavering motive force of his public career.

8. LOVE FOR INVESTIGATION INTO RELIGIOUS TRUTHS.

The crowning constituent of love of truth, which blossomed in the unique heart of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and which was as glorious in its nature as it was pregnant with utmost possibilities for him and for the world, was the love for investigating into truths relating to the true religion or the science of soul. This love naturally started the questions of why and wherefore in matters of religion. It imperiously demanded of him to take all his religious beliefs into the laboratory of truth; analyse each and everyone of them piecemeal, bring to bear on them an absolutely unbiased and detached mind, to apply the searchlight of right criticism, merciless logic and thorough testing. It became imperative on him to reject every such belief

which turned out to be inconsistent with or antagonistic to facts and truths, however dear and precious that belief may have been to him and others.

This phase of the love of truth requires complete freedom from the frequently advocated and dearly cherished but cursed bondage of soul called blind or unquestioned faith in matters religious. Bhagwan's unique heart was utterly liberated from the bonds of blind faith. "I was not ready," writes Bhagwan Dev Atma, "to accept anything under any conditions on the basis merely of faith. Nothing was acceptable to me as truth merely because it was found in or supported by ancient or modern sacred scriptures or because it was accepted as truth by this or that sage of yore or of recent times. *I could accept any belief as true only when it proved to be true.* I knew as a matter of fact that as in the olden days untruth was widely propagated—consciously or unconsciously—by all those so-called sages and seers, *rishis* and *munis*, prophets and preceptors and various exponents of their so-called religions who were void of the love of truth; similarly in the modern times various advocates and apostles of the so-called religious faiths, preach and propagate as truth, various kinds of falsehoods—even such falsehoods, as are on their very face clear as false coin, and which they do or can clearly see as such in the every day experience of their own life. They dare to propagate those clear untruths, either under the delusion of blind faith or in order to subserve their cherished policy of utter hypocrisy, with the object of gaining wealth, fame, name, worldly happiness or such other objects. Since I, on the one hand, could not accept anything as true on the basis of mere belief and, on the other, was possessed of the strongest appetite for truth, I naturally evolved in my soul love for investigating truth in the world of soul or *Dharma*. This love necessarily kept me absorbed in the supreme work of research in this connection."

This love was as glorious and valuable as it was fraught with great difficulties and heart-breaking struggles. The gradual unfolding of this unique force, and its growing sway over his being, kept Bhagwan deeply absorbed in the investigation of the most subtle and difficult truths continuously for years. Times out of number, he had to face overwhelming difficulties and disappointments, and the mental anguish of a lonely traveller on an untrodden path of journey, who is feverishly intent on reaching his goal, and who is bereft even of that much consolation which a soul gets for his efforts, *i.e.*, a single word of appreciation from any human soul. The story of what a heavy toll this single unique force of his life took from Bhagwan is not without its pathos and its unique significance. This story would be mentioned in some detail further on.

RENUNCIATION.

Side by side with the evolution of various constituents of love of truth already mentioned, Bhagwan developed in his unique soul corresponding psychic forces of repulsion for untruth. They were the following eight forces :—

- (१) मिथ्या कथन विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (२) मिथ्या प्रतिज्ञा विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (३) मिथ्या ग्रहण विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (४) मिथ्या समर्थन विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (५) असरलता विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (६) असत्य जन्य अन्यता विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (७) असत्य जन्य प्रत्येक सुख विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति
- (८) असत्य जन्य प्रत्येक लाभ विषयक पूर्ण विराग शक्ति

1. Complete repulsion for all forms of speaking untruth.
2. Complete repulsion for false or untrue vows or promises.
3. Complete repulsion for accepting and assimilating any untruth.
4. Complete repulsion for standing by or following an untruth.
5. Complete repulsion for hypocrisy or insincerity.
6. Complete repulsion for darkness born of untruth.
7. Complete repulsion for all forms of happiness obtainable by untruth.
8. Complete repulsion for all forms of gains derivable from untruth.

These *Veragya* forces or forces of highest repulsions became as mighty in Bhagwan's soul as various forces of love of truth were.

Now what is meant by *Veragya*? *Veragya* means in fact repulsion for whatever is against any dominating love. What is meant by *true Veragya*? The *true Veragya* consists of the evolution in one's heart of complete hatred or repulsion for every such thought and every such deed, which harms one's soul-life, which *Veragya* enable one to refrain from everyone of the harmful thought and act. This kind of *Veragya* does not blossom in every soul. It is born only in such a soul who is possessed of complete love for Truth and complete love for Goodness. Hence the possibility of the evolution of complete *Veragya* should be expected only in that

unique soul who brings in the world a unique heredity of the highest psychic forces of the love for Truth and the love for Goodness.

The world is quite familiar with the word *Veragya*? But the nature of *Veragya* which the world has accepted and followed for centuries past, is either wholly wrong and based on untruth or, if at all it is true, it is only partial. The kind of *Veragya* that has prevailed in India is, almost all, based on untruth and is hence very harmful. There are at present nearly 75 lacs of persons or more who are called *sadhhus* or souls who have renounced the world. They are believed to be possessed of *Veragya*. But look at them and their daily life and what do we find? There are lacs among them, who have adopted yellow dress, as a means to earn their livelihood by unabashed begging. Begging has become their accepted profession. There are thousands among them, who have taken to yellow dress because they lost all family members, had no property to call their own, enjoyed no respect in their *biradri* and who chose to pass their lives on the charity of others and engage their ample leisure time in reading some so-called sacred scripture or in imaginary religious exercises. Such are the men about whom a very significant saying runs thus:—

‘नारि मरी घर सम्पद नासी, मूँड मुंडाय भये सन्यासी ।’

(With the death of wife and loss of wealth and property, he got himself clean shaven and accepted *Sannyas*.)

There are again those who have, at one or other time of their life, committed some crime and who have merged themselves into the huge sea of these homeless *sadhhus* to escape detection at the hands of the police. There are some cheats, who have adopted the dress of a *sadhu*, to practise frauds on those credulous minds, who enshrine deepest reverence for the class of such so-called *sadhhus*. There are some, who have succeeded in securing *mahantship* of some famous *math* or temple and thus become the proprietors of vast lands or *jagirs* attached to these religious places. There are still lacs, who have given up all home ties and other worldly duties and responsibilities, because they have been taught to believe and realise that man—living a domestic life—has to face any amount of worries and miseries of domestic entanglements, and that by abandoning them one becomes a free bird. He goes about wherever he pleases, untrammelled and unrestricted. He gets a full chance to roam about the whole world in company of *sadhhus* and thus enjoys a liberal dose of happy life. There are others again who have snapped all home and other ties in quest of imaginary happiness, which, they are taught to believe, can be had by the worship of Rama, Krishna, Vishnu or Shiva. By such a worship they imagine they can get into heaven, *Vaikunth*, *Golak*, *Shivlok*, etc., after death and float in the waters of absolute felicity there. There are again those who have entered this class in order to get those fabulous powers which the ingenuity of man has associated with the practice of *yogya*. So on and so forth.

These so-called *sadhus* not only grope in utter darkness, because, they are void of the true knowledge of the life of soul, but they even grow more degenerated ; for by renouncing their domestic ties their own lower desires do not vanish. They are goaded by such imperious desire forces to seek their gratification and this they do by unnatural or improper ways. Several among them use intoxicants. A very large number among them commit one or many of the gross sins and vices such as unnatural offences, adultery, theft, cheating, hypocrisy, idleness, etc., etc., and thereby do incalculable harm not only to themselves but to their countrymen and others. Such persons, wearing the garb of a *sadhu*, and passing for a *Sanyasi* or ascetic, prove a menace to the soul-life of thousands of people. Millions among the followers of various false faiths, not only fail to treat them, as they deserve, with supreme contempt, but show unusual zeal in ministering to their various needs and serving them with money, with their body and soul and thereby contribute to their greater degradation by enlarging their scope of mischief.

Rarely would one come across, in this ocean of the so-called *Veragies* or *sadhus* one in a thousand, who can be credited with possessing even ordinary character, and who deserves to be respected for any noble feeling or act. But even this fragment of mankind in this class, which possesses ordinary character and commands esteem for any noble feeling, should be considered true *Veragies* only to the extent that they possess any repulsion for any evil thought and act or, being above the low-love of fame and name, engage, with unselfish motive, in any work of public good. But how many among these 75 lacs of *sadhus* or more can be counted as men of even ordinary good moral life and devoted to any useful or serviceable work? If this vast mass of humanity doing no honest work at all, for their own maintenance, and depending for all their bodily needs upon others, had been possessed of even rudimentary feelings of unselfish service of others, they would have revolutionised the Indian world and proved real asset to this country ; but alas ! they prove now a dead weight on our unfortunate land.

In Europe and America we find thousands, who have risen above selfishness in one or other line, and have devoted their energies to one or other department of service of others. These people *possess in truth some true Veragya*. They wear coats. They wear boots. They wear collars. They live in very neat and tidy homes. They live a civilised life. And yet they do possess true but partial *Veragya*, when and to the extent they contribute their energies in the unselfish service of others. In our own land too all such men who spend their energies, their wealth, their possessions, their time and powers in the service and well-being of others, can be called true but partial *Veragies*. But they are all devoid of the various highest psychic forces of love for truth and goodness, and hence they are devoid also of true and real feelings of *Veragya* which spring from these highest psychic forces. And though they are possessed of

some feeling of unselfish service in one or other line, yet they cherish evil thoughts against others, commit various sinful acts, and propagate lies against any truly noble and revered soul under the dominant sway of various low biases for their own respective creeds, personal predilections, cherished beliefs, traditions, etc., and under the warping influence of jealousy, vindictiveness, false ego, etc. Such men outrage truth and countenance untruth. They prove most harmful to man and to sub-human kingdoms.

Our land not only suffers from the lack of even those partially true *Veragies* but there are scarcely any people even among its cultured class who possess an eye for the appreciation of such true partial *Veragies*. This is extremely deplorable. *Nations become higher according as they possess greater number of individuals who possess higher psychic forces, who devote their energies, their time, their powers and their possessions to the unselfish service of others.*

Let it be borne in mind that love and hate go together. A soul who possesses love for anything is bound to hate its opposite. Hence when the various highest and most blessed psychic forces of love for Truth and Goodness evolved in Bhagwan, the corresponding mightiest forces of repulsion for untruth and wrong also grew in him side by side.

These singular powers distinguished Bhagwan from all those who were void of them in one thousand and one ways. Those void of them began to feel Bhagwan as a stranger to them and who was incomprehensible. It is a law of science of mind that those who do not possess any particular feeling are by their very nature unfitted to understand and sympathise with one possessed of it. This is why Bhagwan felt himself unknown, ignored and even hated by those for whose highest service he was working day and night.

III

THE DRAMA OF UNIQUE FORCES.

The evolution of the various forces of the love of truth and the corresponding forces of hatred for various forms of untruth, combined with wonderful forces of love for goodness and hatred for all that is evil, opened those worlds of thought and activity for Bhagwan which were a sealed book to mankind. He saw what others could not see. He felt what others could not feel. His hungers and thirsts of soul were quite unique. He was worked up by the most overwhelming thirst for the evolution of his own *inner* life forces and the building up of the *inner* lives of others. This was the one ambition of his life. This was the one dream and one passion of his heart. Says Bhagwan :—

“At the age of nearly twenty-three years I came to Lahore. Here I used to spend all my available time, save few hours of my duties in the school, in study and contemplation, writing on serious subjects, delivering lectures and doing lot of other work conducive to the welfare of others. I had a very limited circle of those with whom I associated. With all others of whatever grade or position in life, I established no direct connection of any kind. Even in that limited circle of acquaintances, I had close intimacy with hardly one or two men. I was possessed of a singular mould of mind which had nothing in common with those around me. As there was no psychic kinship or relationship with them hence there was no *heart's union* with them.”

But this does not mean that Bhagwan believed in the hoary ideal of asceticism, in the gospel of cutting off all ties from the world. Says Bhagwan :—

“Living in the midst of humanity I did realise my relationship with man. But it was the lower life of the general man, his evil and sinful tendencies and courses of general behaviour which shocked my higher susceptibilities and made it impossible for me to form any closer intimacy with them.”

It is only birds of same feather that can flock together. Men possessed of opposed temperaments can hardly unite in bonds of love. One who loves cleanliness can hardly put up with the unclean habits. A lover of chastity can hardly form ties of love with a debauchee. A loyal heart rarely, nay, never wastes its love on a traitor. A merciful man can hardly love a most cruel person. It is the antagonistic feelings that bring about war. This is at the root of the storms of oppositions that we generally find raised against even ordinary reformers. History is full of records of the fights that the lovers of liberty had to face at the hands of those cruel and interested people who were anxious to keep alive that most inhuman,

most atrocious and most horrible institution of slave-trade. Such is the fate of innovators, and such the destiny of those who live, think and act against the established order of things in mankind.

Bhagwan's activities were directed not against one evil or one wrong, but they were directed against all such forms of wrong and untruth that he came to realise truly as untruths and wrongs. Rightly therefore he remarks :—

“Owing to my uncommon religious beliefs and declarations, my peculiar rites and ceremonies, my opposition to traditional forms of custom, and usages, I could not attract to me those who were void of any regard or respect for my unique forces. Hence all that I got for my labours was violent opposition.”

This opposition never deterred Bhagwan for a single moment from the onward march to his goal. It never dissuaded him from the world of his singular and unique activities. He says :—

“These evolved highest forces moved my thoughts and body much in the same way as lower feelings influence the thoughts and activities of lower men. Being possessed by them.

(1) It became *impossible* for me to lead any man to any course of life which was antagonistic to good ;

(2) It became *imperative* on me to contribute my services to the good of human and sub-human existences ;

(3) It became *imperative* on me to engage myself in the most difficult task of research in the world of truth and to propagate far and wide any truths that I succeeded in discovering ; and

(4) It became *absolutely imperative* on me to launch and carry out my siege operations against the citadels of all forms of evil and sinful practices, all forms of false religious beliefs, etc., and not only rescue, as many human souls as I could, from their fell grip but to form these liberated souls into an organised body with the sole object of evolving higher life in them.” (*Vide Atam Katha.*)

This wonderful and evolved condition of Bhagwan's soul-life enabled him to see what others did not see, and to achieve what others were absolutely incompetent to achieve. His pen and tongue, being the vehicles of his unique soul-life, carried singular charm for many. In a short while, Bhagwan won reputation for being an unsurpassed orator of his time and a remarkable journalist. There were thousands in the public who would otherwise look askance at him for his singular and forward activities, but who would all the same hang on his lips when he spoke. When he spoke on non-religious topics, *i.e.*, when he had to address the public on any political subject or any topic of general interest, the meeting place however big it was used to get packed up to its utmost capacity. Hundreds of hearts felt strange fascination for him. A Barrister, who heard Bhagwan's speeches in his youth, once said “when your *Guru* spoke in the days of his youth, the very walls used (as if) to shake. His most thundering and eloquent voice could be heard

distinctly even at very great distances. He was wonderful master of words." It was universally acknowledged that he kept his audience spell-bound. *Bhagwan was always unaffected by public applause or public condemnation.* He was lover of truth and goodness. He loved to serve them. His absolute motives of conduct were his unique loves and their corresponding unique hates. Hence he was ever ready to face any amount of hostility which his loyalty to Truth and Goodness brought on his head. Consequently the world around him was not only impressed by his vigorous pen and marvellous power of speech but by his unique character. The worst enemies of his, several times spontaneously burst out "Oh! Pandit Agnihotri is a marvel of moral power and spiritual insight."

IV

CRUSADE AGAINST EVIL.

The unique forces of love of truth and hatred for untruth and unique love for goodness and hatred for evil made it impossible for him to compromise with any untruth or any evil which he believed as such. Nay, it made it impossible for him to let untruth rule and evil permeate society without raising his mighty voice against them. This was the reason which led Bhagwan all unprompted and all unaided to start in 1875 two journals on his own responsibility and at his own expense for the service of his fellow human beings. He called his Urdu paper *Bradar-i-Hind*, i. e., *Brother of India*. The Hindi journal lasted for 19 months, but the Urdu journal continued its useful career for full seven years. The articles in these journals, read even to-day, strike one with the wonderful fervour, vast sympathies and hunger for truth and intense anxiety to wipe out evils and falsehoods, which animated the spirit of Bhagwan—their author.

We draw upon this rich store of inspiring writings to show the relentless war which Bhagwan waged in those early times against evils and in defence of higher life.

1. VOICE AGAINST DRINKING.

In the December issue of the *Brother of India* of the year 1876, Bhagwan wrote a long article on "Drink and its Evils," which not only clearly indicates the motives of Bhagwan in raising his strong voice against this horrible evil and his fearlessness in exposing it, but a curious fact that *his appeal is made to the reason of man and facts and laws of Nature* and not to any book or revelation or superstition or authority. And this was done in 1876.

— He writes :—

" Since the use of various intoxicants and specially of spirituous liquors is spreading fast in our land, *and is breeding, as a matter of course, any amount of evils* leading to physical and spiritual ruin of man, involving him in disgrace, in poverty and various other ills; since, in spite of the growing light of education and knowledge, the evil flourishes unabated, and the infection is spreading far and wide, the writer has taken up his pen against that evil in accordance with the Persian proverb, "If I see a blind man and a well ahead to which he is moving, it is sinful to remain silent." The object of this article is *to stimulate in man a desire to see what is right and what is wrong and to appeal to his reason and sense of justice* (which two possessions have got him the designation of the highest among all creatures) to decide for himself how far the use of spirituous liquors is consonant with his reason and with his sense of justice; and not only to abjure it himself but to help his other brethren to get free

from its grip."

Continuing further, Bhagwan Dev Atma writes :—

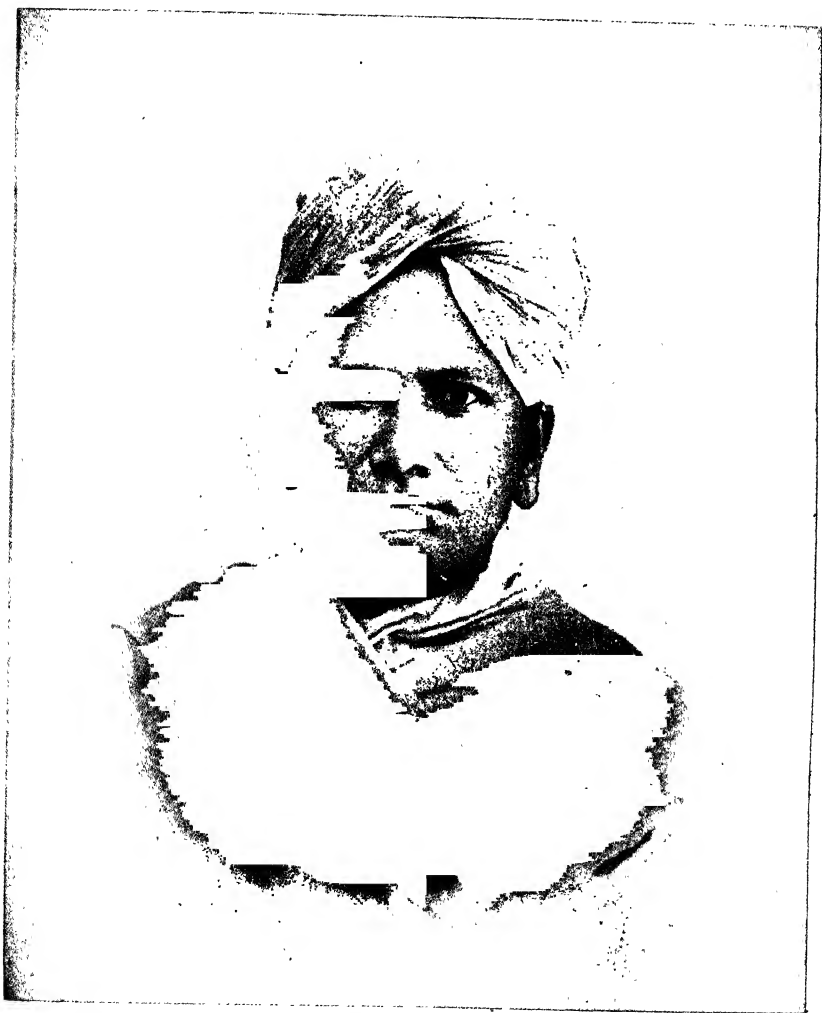
"When we look at a man, we see that like animals he eats, drinks, sleeps, wakes, procreates, instinctively tries to avoid harmful things and resorts to beneficial things. Along with all this, he possesses something which gives him pre-eminence over all animals. He possesses progressive intelligence. The animals do possess intelligence but it is of very elementary kind. There is no limit to the intelligence of man. Hence there is no limit to his progress."

"What is meant by progress of man? What are the means of achieving that progress? On the face of it progress implies change from one condition to a better one. This change never means change from iron into wood or wood into a monkey. By change we mean an advance made in the bodily or mental conditions with which we are equipped at birth. As opposed to this there is a change which we call degradation..."

"This progress which is an imperative duty of every man to make is twofold—physical and spiritual. Physical progress is attained by the fulfilment of all those conditions which we term physical laws and which lead to physical health and well-being of man. The spiritual progress rests on the fulfilment of all those conditions which we term spiritual laws."

"It is no doubt true that one should give precedence to spiritual welfare over physical welfare. But so long as the soul is living on this earth in the tabernacle of (gross) body, we have also to minister unto it. Its health and progress proves a great blessing. But, if one looks after the health and well-being of one's body, he is bound to make some progress in his spiritual life as well."

"It is a well-known proverb, 'health is wealth.' Undoubtedly health of body is a great boon. Hence it is obligatory on man to fulfil all those laws of Nature which lead to health. The necessary function of the progressive intellect which man is endowed with, is to investigate into the laws of health by itself and to avail oneself of all such laws which the sages and scientists of old have unearthed for us. A study of our own Sanskrit literature would convince us that even in those days of yore when our land compared to other lands was at its zenith so far its civilisation and moral progress were concerned, our forefathers were not indifferent to the considerations of bodily health. Nay, they laid that down as a primary duty of man, and hence made immense progress in the field of knowledge relating to it. All this is evident from a short perusal of our ancient books. They did not confine themselves to theoretical knowledge. They made these researches a practical creed of the people. Even to-day we find several customs which have their origin in this practical application of the laws of health. Daily baths among Hindus, clean place to partake of meals in use of fragrant things like flowers, sweet-scented perfumes, rubbing of *chandan* on body, sprinkling of *attar* and essence of rose and rose-water on the occasions of marriage,



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burning of camphor and *hom* for the purposes of purifying air, all illustrate the vestiges of the glorious civilisation of the old. But when the wheel of time changed its course, the light of knowledge and civilisation began to dim, the sun of our country's glory set, and ignorance, darkness and illiteracy set in, many good usages began to fade and disappear..."

"But the wheel of time has again turned. The advent of the British proved a precursor of the light of knowledge. The net work of schools, opened at various places by the Educational Department, have breathed a spirit of enlightenment in the dead bones of our land. Hundreds and thousands of people have profited by these fountains of knowledge and have attained heights of great enlightenment and ability. The work of progress is getting brisker every day. The youths of our land are endeavouring fast to introduce Western civilisation into our land."

"We feel a reasonable pride in the progress that our country is making in education and knowledge. *But our joy or pride is not unmixed. There are certain aspects of Western civilisation which strike us with consternation.* The condition of our young men is the living illustration of the saying 'little knowledge is a dangerous thing.' This more often than not leads to their ruin. Some marvels of the Western education, wrought in the lives of a few Indians, have created in the hearts of the general youth, an anxiety to imitate the Western civilisation indiscriminately and mould our land after that. They seem to lack the critical faculty which might enable them to sift what is good from what is evil. *No nation in the world at any time of its civilisation can claim monopoly of all virtues and immunity from all defects, drawbacks or evils.* Why does it not therefore strike our youth that in the midst of shining good that they reasonably see in the British civilisation, there may be something of evil and dross in their customs, manners, usages, practices, etc. The absence of this critical faculty has produced disastrous results in the lives of our young men. *They rarely imitate what is good in English civilisation. But they seem to be over-earnest in imitating the evil side of their civilisation.* This rapid imitation of the evils causes a reasonable apprehension in the minds of the thoughtful portion of our land that if this state of things continues unabated, there is bound to be a calamitous end of many a youth."

"This prefatory note leads us to the review of that aspect of the evil side of British civilisation which is concerned with the drink question. Our Indian youth seems to feel a sort of morbid attraction for this vice. The progress, made with giant strides in drink, fills us with fear of the inevitable degradation of our land. It is this evil in the life of the Britisher which our youths feel pleasure and pride to copy and assimilate in their lives. This is alcohol which is a fatal poison."

"*The use of drink is most popular in all such European lands where Christianity prevails. So far as our knowledge goes the Christian religion does not clearly prohibit the use of drink.* Some of

Christian customs on the contrary sanction its use. During Christmas they have to follow a religious custom in which friends and relations congregate together and each of them takes up a cup of wine, and deeming it to be blood of Jesus Christ, drinks it off straightway to the sacred memory of Christ. They imagine, that the wine thus quaffed, would enter their bodies and purify their hearts. On marriage occasions these Christian people freely use wine. Even at ordinary dinners or other entertainments they consider wine as the most necessary accompaniment. The host considers this the best way of expressing cordial greeting for a guest, much in the same way, as offering of smoke to a guest is considered as a sign of welcome in our land....*In fact these Christians use drink in place of milk."*

"It is a matter of sincere gratitude that Hindu and Mohamedan religions prohibit the use of this noxious water...But prohibitions on paper is of no use so long as man himself does not reflect upon the nature of this evil, and by reason and experiment realise the dangers involved in its use. How many there are who realise drink as an evil, because it is opposed to the laws of Nature and thus refrain from it. Hence he is a true abstainer who probes into the very nature of this evil and feels it as absolutely opposed to those laws of Nature which relate to the bodily health and well-being of man. We ought, therefore, to treasure this advice in our minds, that we should not use any such thing, before we have exercised our reason and critical faculty over it, and found it for ourselves, whether its use would benefit or harm us. Unquestioning imitation of any such evil is fraught with great dangers for every man." In this strain Bhagwan continued to dilate upon the evils of drink in subsequent articles. It would pay even to-day to read them.

Even in the year 1876 the appeal that Bhagwan Dev Atma made to his readers was not of this or that book or this or that belief. He called upon man to exercise his faculties of judgment over the evils he unquestioningly imitates and discover for himself whether that evil conforms to or contradicts, not commands of so-called God but the eternal, changeless, universal and dependable laws of Nature pertaining to the bodily health and well-being of man. This is a rational appeal. Such an appeal to logic and facts is alone calculated to liberate human minds from the strong chains of superstition and falsehood, servile homage to books or so-called revelations, and lands man in the happy land flooded with the sunshine of absolute stern facts and laws governing them. Besides this, the motive behind Bhagwan's agitation against evil even at that age, was his great compassion for those, who went straight into the jaws of evil under the mistaken notions that pursuit of such evils was a mark of respectability. Even to-day there are thousands, who imitate evil European customs, usages and practices as the only passport for entry into the so-called higher circles.

2. ABSTINENCE FROM FLESH-FOOD DEFENDED.

Though Bhagwan Dev Atma was an *Acharya* of Brahmo Samaj, its leader and its life and soul in the Punjab and though there were several Brahmos of great eminence who took flesh, Bhagwan Dev Atma hated the practice of subsisting on the slaughtered corpses of poor dumb, innocent and useful animals merely because these innocent beings were not able to defend themselves, and because man had more power and means to victimise them and thus gratify his developed and diseased taste for their flesh. In the month of July 1879 Bhagwan published in the columns of his own magazine *Bradar-i-Hind* a big article on the basis of an English journal. The caption of the article was "Flesh is not the Food of Man." Wrote Bhagwan :—

"An English journal lays down twenty-four reasons in support of the fact that flesh does not constitute the food for man and *man should not use it as food*. As some of the reasons are clear, strong and convincing and throw a flood of light upon this subject and the baneful results of flesh-taking, we publish them for the benefit of our readers :—

The internal and external bodily constitution of man indicates clearly that he has not descended from the line of carnivorous animals. He is brought into being in order to subsist on vegetables, grains and fruits...'

Besides this, there are twenty-three other-reasons recorded, which we briefly summarise here as they have become now very familiar to our readers. It is stated that man as a rule takes flesh of such of the animals as are themselves herbivorous or living on vegetables. Hence instead of having vegetables first hand, he takes them second hand. This flesh consists of only 36 per cent of the real nutrition and 64 per cent is water, while grains like wheat contain 80 or 90 per cent of body-building properties. The carnivorous animals prey upon others at night time while night is intended for man to sleep. Hence he does not belong to carnivorous type. All such animals that have served man for ages and are known as strong and swift-footed as those which live on vegetables such as cow, bullock, horse, ass, camel, etc. Vegetarians again are free from some of those fatal maladies, which have made their abode in the body of non-vegetarian men. Among the Greeks there were a class of people known as Spartans. They have left a name for courage, strength, diligence and beauty of form and features which is unsurpassed in the history of man. All these men were strict vegetarians. It is also a well known fact that the victorious armies of Greece and Rome which caused terror among enemies were living on vegetable diet. Their downfall among other causes can be traced to this fact also that they gave up living on pure vegetable diet and adopted flesh-taking. Several functions of human body speak eloquently of the suitability of only vegetable diet for man. The carnivorous animals do not perspire while man

does perspire. The carnivorous animals do not masticate their food. Man does. Carnivorous animals drink water by licking with tongue. Man like other herbivorous or fruitarian animals drinks and not licks water. Animals living on grains or fruits have more saliva than carnivorous animals. The greatest thinkers of the world like Plato, Plutarch, Diagynus, Zino, Seneca, John Welsely, Swedenbough, Shelly, etc., were either strict vegetarians, for all their lives or the best portion of their lives. Again the moral sense of normal man revolts at the sight of the tortures undergone by animals when the butcher's knife is laid upon their throat. Lastly carnivorous animals as a rule are blood-thirsty, ferocious, savage, while herbivorous animals are comparatively gentler, more sober-minded, more serviceable and less savage. Even when carnivorous animals are fed on vegetable diet they lose much of their ferocity.

These reasons hold good for all times.

Bhagwan's hatred for flesh-taking was so full and deep that he has laid down an unalterable condition of membership of his unique society, that every individual anxious to get himself admitted as its member, should among other conditions pledge himself against taking flesh. Such a man is even required never directly or indirectly to help others in this hateful practice. Hence none of the Dev Samajists can ever be a flesh-taker.

3. EVIL SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

Every higher force lends its own light and power to its possessor. Bhagwan Dev Atma's love of goodness and repulsion for all that was antagonistic to goodness filled his heart with unique light and power, and made it impossible for him to compromise, with anything that was evil in customs, manners, usages, practices, etc., or sit silent when they were playing havoc on mankind. His own growing light showed him what was good or evil in different relations and his unique soul moved him to accept the first and reject the other even in the face of any amount of difficulties or risks. As a boy of hardly twelve summers he commenced educating the two ladies of his house as recorded in Part II when it was considered extremely objectionable to educate women. This happened in 1862. His noble wife was only a girl, when his ceremony of *gauna* (bringing the bride home) was performed. She was unlettered then. And yet he educated her himself. She learned Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and even English. He gave her equal opportunities of growth in higher life and service. She shook off *purdah* in public when she came to Lahore, and she was a solitary woman of her class then. She also devoted her energies to the amelioration of her sex, as Bhagwan Dev Atma did in the service of all. When she died a great void was felt by the public at Lahore and outside. On receiving the news of her death a gentleman wrote :—"In this land she was *the one lady* who knew and felt, that she had come into the world to achieve some higher purpose in life." From Amritsar an Arya Samajist wrote :—

"Shrimatiji was not of the common run of human beings. This our land has really felt the loss in her death because in her this country had great hopes of growing better." A gentleman from Ambala wrote :—"I would not have been half so unhappy if my own wife had died, as I have been feeling from the time I have heard about the sad demise of your noble consort. The passing away of such a pure, such a noble woman and such a true well-wisher of our race is not only painful for you, for me and others but it is a misfortune for the Punjab ladies." A gentleman from Allahabad wrote :—"There is not the least doubt that the premature demise of Shrimati Lilavati is a *real loss* not only to you (her husband) but to the whole Hindu race."

And yet Bhagwan Dev Atma alone had a hand in moulding and educating his noble companion into such a cultured and self-sacrificing soul. His innate higher forces made it impossible for him to let ignorance or selfishness remain in his own wife. Hence the one lady who was a social reform worker in Hindu society at that time was Bhagwan's own wife.

It was in the month of June 1877 that Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote a note on the evils of child marriage which is not without its own peculiar significance. He wrote :—

"The readers of our journal must have realised fully, that child marriage is a source of infinite harm to our country and is the chief cause of degrading and dwarfing our future generations. Its manifold evils are at least clear to our educated brethren. *There are lakhs who believe this to be an evil custom. But these people lack moral courage to stand against it. They do not muster up courage to remove it.* On the contrary the fear of their ignorant custom-ridden community people, works like a nightmare upon their heart. Instead of guiding their less enlightened brethren, they accept their guidance, for the fear of being in their bad books. It is our belief, that, so long as man is void of true higher life, he is bound to be a bond slave to the worldly-minded people. It is well known that a slave of the world will not be able to do any such truly noble and good act which is opposed to the prevalent custom of the world and which is actively resisted by the unenlightened community. Hence there is hardly a man or none at all who has the courage to break a long prevalent evil social custom."

This was the voice raised by Bhagwan in 1877, when it was an anathema to talk against prevalent evil social customs. This was the time when Arya Samaj was not even born and Swami Dayanand had just come to the Punjab for the first time to start his own movement. To talk against such matters was a blasphemy. But to actively remove them was inconceivable. And yet Bhagwan Dev Atma practised in his own life everything he preached.

He raised his voice not only against child marriage but in that short note he showed his strong disapproval of any form of marriage, which did not let bride and bridegroom to exercise their own free

will in the choice of one another and any such rituals and ceremonies which were superfluous, unmeaning and harmful. He again wrote in 1877 :—

“Our readers would be glad to know that a marriage is about to be celebrated which is not only opposed to the custom of child marriage but which is calculated to strengthen the custom of bride and bridegroom exercising their own choice in marriage. The ceremonies to be performed would be absolutely free from all symbols of idol-worship and unmeaning or superfluous rites.”

This novel marriage was celebrated next month. And the presiding priest for the occasion was Bhagwan Dev Atma himself. What a freedom from all bonds of evil public opinion, or what a singular courage to stand by what is good, does this small incident show. Public opinion is a huge monster. Even to-day when there are lakhs who realise child marriage to be an evil, the orthodox Mussalmans and Hindus are agitating against Sarda Act which demands that minimum age of girls for marriage should be fourteen. Even a great personality like Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya had to bend to orthodox opinions and stand aside when this Act was passed. Not a single person from Bhagwan Dev Atma's own big community was then with him, in what he did. And yet he dared to stand by what he believed to be good, irrespective of all considerations of risk, harm, bad name or even persecution.

The marriage was celebrated. The news were published in the form of a note in the July issue of 1877, of *Bradar-i-Hind*. We quote some portion of it to show that it was the first marriage of its kind, in the whole of the Punjab and hence something novel and unorthodox.

“In our May issue we gave a notice of an altogether new form of marriage that was to be celebrated at Lahore. There were several people who were extremely anxious to attend it and see its performance with their own eyes. We are glad to write that it came off with great success. It is a pride for Lahore that after long ages it witnessed a day when the first and the only marriage ceremony which was celebrated by means of reformed rites, took place in this land of the five rivers. We heartily congratulate Babu Navin Chandra Roy specially and other members of the Brahmo Samaj generally, who helped in the performance and success of this novel ceremony.....Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri (the original name of Bhagwan Dev Atma) performed the functions of the presiding priest. Besides the Hindustani ladies who mustered strong there, there were about 300 men of various beliefs and creeds who attended the ceremony. In fact the pick of the cultured Lahore society people were present on the occasion.”

“When all people took their respective seats.....the party of singers sang one of the hymns composed for the occasion. Then the presiding priest took his seat on the raised platform and offered prayers for special benedictions and the successful celebration of

the ceremonies. Thereafter the bride and bridegroom were introduced to the public. They received public ovation in deep resounding notes. Then the bride and bridegroom took preliminary vows. Presents were exchanged by both. These consisted of clothes, jewellery, etc., which were brought there for the purpose. Then the father of the bride was asked to publicly declare that he was willing to give in marriage the hand of his daughter Bishwa Boha Devi aged fourteen to Babu Madan Mohan Sarcar aged thirty. Then four witnesses (two on behalf of the bridegroom namely Lala Ganda Mal and Lala Ralla Ram and two on behalf of the bride namely Lala Shardha Ram and Lala Beni Parshad) were nominated for the occasion. These four witnesses evinced their consent to be witness of the ceremony in that assembly. Thereafter the hands of the couple were united and tied by wreathes of flowers prepared for the occasion. Then both were made to take special vows in relation to each other and offer hearty prayers for life long loyalty to each other."

"After all this was over, the presiding priest gave his own sermon. This was indeed the crowning touch of the whole occasion. This sermon was felt not only interesting and elevating for the new couple for whom it was primarily intended but even for the general audience. The priest addressed himself individually to bride and bridegroom, described the duties and responsibilities of the new relationship into which they had entered from Hindu scriptures and the laws and principles, which it was their bounden duty to abide by, in order to successfully fulfil their respective obligations."

4. IN DEFENCE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

In the course of his illuminating sermon, the presiding *Acharya* said something in defence of women's rights which when read even in this century and in our own times, appears quite refreshing and instructive. Said Bhagwan Dev Atma as *Acharya* of that ceremony :—

"If we look to the underlying laws or principles of the coming into being of man and woman, we see clearly that they are born equal. Apparently, we see that there are certain attributes in man which are absent in woman; while there are certain attributes in woman which are absent in man. But the presence of certain qualities in one and absence thereof in another makes them complementary to one another. This is what Nature shows us. They—both man and woman—are dependent upon each other. They become complete only by their happy and harmonious union. *Justice, therefore, does not permit us to define one as inferior and another as superior.* It is really most painful and distressing to see that even though Nature has produced man and woman equal, the undue arrogance of man has led him to condemn woman as inferior. Even the Western nations—whom we call civilised and about whom it is said by the men of low understanding, including some of the so-called educated people, that they have given too much liberty to

woman—have not given equal rights to woman and time is not far when they will give woman the status, which Nature has emphatically laid down for them. But *we feel sure that the time is bound to come when all these disabilities (attaching to sex) would be wiped off.* In our land treatment accorded to woman is so very sad, that one has to hang down his head in shame.” Addressing the bridegroom, Bhagwan Dev Atma said :—

“ It is your duty, Madan Mohan Sarcar ! to fulfil your duties and your obligations in this connection so well and so satisfactorily, that it may serve as a unique example of equality in treatment and status of man and woman.”

These words in the year 1877 must have jarred upon the ears of many. But Bhagwan Dev Atma had shown, in his own personal case, the most brilliant illustration of the equal status of woman with man. He permitted his noble wife full opportunities for physical, mental and spiritual evolution and for equal service of mankind. As the Founder of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan has thrown open all the avenues of all the possible positions of trust and service to woman.

5. IN DEFENCE OF WIDOW REMARRIAGE.

It was in the month of June 1880 that Bhagwan Dev Atma organised a regular society and published its existence, in the columns of *Bradar-i-Hind* the prime object whereof, was to help the down-trodden Hindu widows, from the slough of the enforced widowhood. Its objects, methods of work and conditions of membership ran as under :—

(1) “ The object of this *Sabha* (society) is to give information to such of the widows, their relations or helpers, who are willing to remarry, about the names of the persons, who are ready and anxious to marry widows and who are otherwise fit for them ; as well to inform such persons who are willing to marry widows about the names and whereabouts of such widows who are willing to marry and who are otherwise fit for them. *It is also the object of the society to inform the public that widow marriage is allowable* by the religious scriptures. It is also the object of the society to render every kind of proper help in the celebrations of such marriages.

(2) “ In order to carry out the objects, the secretaries will be appointed in various centres such as Lahore, Agra, Calcutta, Bombay, etc., who will maintain two strictly confidential registers. One of these registers would contain the names of such of the widows, who are willing to remarry and who have either personally or through a relation or helper of theirs, informed the secretary of their such intentions. The second register would contain the names of all such men, who are willing to marry widows and have conveyed to the secretary their such intentions. These registers will not be accessible to any but the genuine and whole-hearted supporters of widow remarriage or those willing to set an example by marrying

widows. In no case shall the registers be shown to those who are open enemies of this movement or who attack it.

(3) "Those who help forward the object of this society would be called its members. Two lists of members would be maintained. The first shall consist of those who do not hesitate to declare before the world their open adherence to the cause of widow remarriage. The second would contain the names of such of the members who want their names to be kept a secret.

(4) "The following gentleman has agreed to work as secretary for the present :—

Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri, Lahore...."

Thus Bhagwan Dev Atma whose original name was Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri was not merely the organiser of this new society but was its open advocate and the first secretary. *He was always in the forefront of every kind of reform, however unpopular it then was.* His love for goodness was too imperious a force in his unique soul and it led Bhagwan to actively champion every cause which helped goodness irrespective of favour or frown of the world and all direct or indirect shafts of persecution and vilification. This mighty force, set against all forms of evils, was indeed the most priceless treasure for the Punjab specially and India generally. It was the one unique force to lay an axe at the root of that monster tree of evils, which had grown tall and broad in the darkness, ignorance and under the pall of fictions which had flourished for centuries in our benighted land. But those whose heads and hearts had grown immured to this blighting pall were frightened at the dawn and active manifestation of this unique force and assumed an attitude of opposition, which though insane gathered volume and strength as time went on and assumed a horrible mass form. But the unique love of goodness which had blossomed in all its glory in the unique heart of Bhagwan, carried in its very texture the seeds of sure victory. And thus, though the highest benefactor of mankind was persecuted most horribly, the cause for which he stood up took root and gradually and steadily conquered and flourished.

Bhagwan championed the cause of widows not only by open advocacy in 1880, but helped in the marriage of widows. When a time came for him to marry after the premature demise of his first noble wife, he set an example in his own life of widow remarriage. Thus widow remarriage had the best advocate in Bhagwan Dev Atma, at a time, when it was an anathema to even speak in favour of that reform.

6. UNSELFISH SERVICE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's entire soul-constitution militated from his very childhood against the life of selfishness as that was inherently antagonistic to the love for goodness. Love of selfishness is eminently fitted to produce evil, callousness, disharmony in relations and all forms and kinds of crimes and sins. Bhagwan was an inveterate

foe of evil and was determined to root out of the world the source and fountain of evil in human nature. In his own being he laid down practical example of a life always tuned to one ideal of not only eradicating evil but doing active service of others. Hence when he came to Lahore and was led by his unique nature to associate himself with everything that stood for reform, he felt an imperative urge to reach his country people by means of his pen. The fact that he started in 1875, two papers, illustrates amply the existence in Bhagwan's heart, of deep sympathy for his own countrymen and motherly anxiety to minister unto them, irrespective of what sacrifices he must necessarily have to make for them. In the columns of his journal *Bradar-i-Hind*, dated 1st June, 1876, Bhagwan writes as under :—

“In the month of May 1875 we convened a meeting. We called very highly learned Pandits who were unbiased in their outlook and conscious of the present degraded condition of our people of this land. We placed before them facts regarding the degradation in our religion, in our morals and civilisation, in the decline of Sanskrit language and in various other branches of our country's life. All of them were of one mind that the condition of our country was really most deplorable and that it would not be an exaggeration to say that in some respects animals lived a better life than our countrymen. They felt thankful that time had come for the improvement of such a state. The present Government we said has providentially come, not only to give us the blessings of peace, order and protection, but the great benefits of enlightenment and culture. These peaceful times we said are extremely favourable to us. If during such favourable times, we sit with folded hands and do nothing for the promotion and progress of the cause of our moral and religious amelioration, it would be a matter indeed of extreme sorrow. It is the most paramount duty of such of our countrymen, who have acquired education and enlightenment, who are free from the jaundice of bigotry and partisanship, who realise the importance of moral life and religion, to come forward and let not this golden opportunity slip out of their hands, and they should bestir themselves to help our land to come out of the present vortex of decline.”

This appeal of Bhagwan went home to the great Pandits present.

“All of them felt the necessity of taking measures to remove this sad state of affairs. It was resolved to issue two journals in Hindi and Urdu under the title of *Brother of India* with the prime object of enthusiastically publishing in them vigorous and learned articles on moral, social and religious subjects.”

“After this it was placed before the meeting how to meet the expenses. *The very talk of expenses produced a sort of unpleasant sensation among those present.* The Editor (i.e., Bhagwan Dev Atma) however removed their confusion and anxiety by volunteering to meet all expenses. They however promised to contribute some

learned articles for it."

Did they keep their promise? The public specially in India can agree whole-heartedly to the reasonableness of doing something for the good of others provided it entails no financial sacrifice or mental labour. What happened in this case is thus described in the journal :—

"In the first place hundreds of handbills were published and widely circulated announcing the starting of the journals and their object, and creating in the public a feeling for the need and importance of such a venture and securing subscribers thereof. When some subscribers were secured the journals were started in the month of May 1875. Since that month the journals have been regularly printed and published. Looking to the object of these journals we entertained a sanguine hope before starting these papers that out of the Urdu and Hindi speaking public belonging to the Punjab, U. P., etc., which number four to five crores, we shall get, to start with, at least 400 or 500 subscribers; and which number would gradually swell as their importance grew in the eyes of the educated people.....But our hopes have been dashed to pieces. Though the journals have made distinct progress so far as the subject matter is concerned and after seven months of their existence the pages have been increased from 16 to 24, the response from the public has been comparatively very small. Not to speak of the subscribers, *even those Pandits who were in the beginning enthusiastic about writing articles for our journals have silently slipped away.*"

But all this did not in the least discourage Bhagwan to an extent as to drop the venture when those for whose good they were started, were so callously indifferent and those who promised help to write for them silently dropped off. Bhagwan did not start these journals with any mercenary object in view. Again it was not a venture of any organisation. Bhagwan as an individual started them with the altruistic object of awakening his countrymen to the horrors of their decline and helping them on to make progress in their social, moral and religious life. It was a divine motherly feeling for helping the helpless and promoting the health and progress of the soul-life of man. As the feeling behind the venture was love for goodness and repulsion for evil, all these discouragements did not damp his spirits and cool his ardour. Day by day his love grew and hence though two or three gentlemen made some contributions to the Hindi journal, the Urdu journal was edited by him all alone, while the financial burden was shared by none.

It is a curious fact that in those days all other journals were edited by Mohamedans alone. There were several Mohamedan editors and writers, while Hindus, though educated in great numbers, showed no inclination for this line. A Mohamedan journal sometimes contained all articles from the pen of various subscribers—all Mohamedans—while the editor wrote not a single article. This

showed the interest Mohamedans felt in the propagation of their ideas.

Bhagwan had laid down a great truth that a journal which was started for educating public opinion should not be one man show. It should be a society's venture. Many men should feel it a social obligation to contribute their thought in a journal and write for the public from their own point of view. *If society does not awaken to this great social obligation, it is not alive.* The very existence of any race or nation depends on the principle of corporate life. *What concerns many should be felt by them as work for the many.* Hence every journal started for the service of any society should command as a necessary element, sympathy and active co-operation of its members.

Bhagwan did not get the co-operation in those days as Hindu society was not awake. Bhagwan was the first Hindu to lead the way as a great propagandist.

But this apart, the morale of the subscribers was also extremely deplorable. Says Bhagwan in the issue of his Urdu paper for June 1876 :—

“The second deplorable factor is the absence of response from the public and consequent paucity of subscribers. We do not lament this fact from any sordid motive of monetary gain. Those who know us can endorse this fact that such a motive is foreign to our nature. We only feel that if any public work receives no adequate public response it can never flourish and gain permanent footing. India at present is so unhappily circumstanced that such of its children who have gained liberal outlook on life and are feeling intensely for the welfare of our motherland, possess as a rule no financial means. They are as a rule poor ; while those who roll in wealth waste away their money in the gratification of their sensual pleasures. They feel it nothing short of death to contribute money for public good. Under these circumstances what a deep shock would a true lover of country receive, when he sees failure staring him in the face in his beloved object of public good. What a cold water is cast on his warm enthusiasm and his noble fervour.....”

“There are our subscribers who have, on their own application, been enrolled as such, and yet when the time comes for them to pay their small subscription, they grow cold and reluctant to pay. When this journal was started several respectable men of a locality including several Extra Assistant Commissioners applied for the paper being sent to them. We began sending it to their names without advance as they were apparently highly placed. We continued sending it for full seven months. But since we wanted to close our yearly accounts for the last year, we sent a request to them in the month of December to pay up their subscription. But they observed absolute silence and sent no reply. This request was repeated. Ultimately bills were sent to them. But they did not care to attend to them. At last being utterly helpless we stopped sending paper

to their name. From that time up to now we have not troubled them again with our demand."

"Non-payment of such a small amount by them is a matter of no great loss to us. What pains and amazes us is the morale of such persons enjoying such eminent position. These gentlemen proudly attach to their names, the designation of E. A. C. Their private life is such that they do not pay off a rupee or two which they owe to others. This is their sense of justice. How can such men, who deny justice to their own creditors to the extent of even a rupee or two, administer even-handed justice to others..."

There is one amusing instance of a subscriber which Bhagwan mentioned in the same article, which we find instructive and make bold to quote here :—

"A gentleman, a Head Clerk and Brahman by caste, became its subscriber from its very inception. The paper was sent to his address for full eight or nine months without his having made any advance. After reading our journal for so many months he wrote that as we exploded belief in idol-worship by reason and logic, he considered it a sin to read it any longer, as nothing would remain of Hinduism, if idol-worship was demolished. We sent a reply to his letter. We wrote to him that we were sorry that we made him a sinner for so many long months (according to his own statement). The object of our journal was to save man from sin and not to fling him into it. It is sad that he did not inform us earlier as we would have refrained from putting the load of sin on our shoulders, and he should feel sure that the journal would never again be despatched to his name and address. But we wrote further that as sin (of accepting and reading the paper) must be expiated, he should in order to get necessary expiation send us the amount due from him. The man got the letter and never sent the amount that he had to pay. It is strange that man becomes a sinner when he reads several contributions one after another in several issues of our paper but he does not become a sinner when he refuses to pay his debt to us in the form of subscription. What a reason! What a humanity!!"

This can give us an insight into the extreme difficulties under which Bhagwan Dev Atma when aged only twenty-five ventured on a singular enterprise of pure public service in order to awaken his countrymen to their own declining condition and make an endeavour to take them forward on the road of progress. This was a time when press was practically monopolised by Mohamedans who were being generously helped by their co-religionists. The Hindus had been woefully indifferent so much so that when a vigorous and high class journal which commanded great esteem in the fraternity of journalists was started by an individual for philanthropic purpose, there was hardly any response, any appreciation, any practical help from anybody. The entire burden of printing, publishing, despatching and even meeting money obligations was upon Bhagwan's own shoulders. It was, on the one hand, his deep and full

repulsion for the life of selfishness and, on the other, the pure unselfish and unadulterated love of goodness which made it possible for Bhagwan Dev Atma to continue this venture for full seven years. And thereafter too if this journal was closed down, Bhagwan started another. Throughout his public career extending over 50 years he ceaselessly served mankind by his most vigorous, illuminating and extremely uplifting pen.

7. CASTE-SYSTEM AND OTHER SOCIAL EVIL.

We assign a separate chapter to caste system because we know how even to-day this form of insanity rules Hindu mind. It shall be very interesting to read Bhagwan Dev Atma's views even in the seventies of the last century.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's sympathy for the suffering souls and his unique courage led him to raise his most thundering voice against all evils including time honoured evil social customs. Bhagwan hated hypocrisy and insincerity as fatal poisons to soul-life. Hence he would not take shelter under any subterfuge. When he believed any evil to be an evil he would not remain silent merely because the whole world rose against him. He knew no fear and sought no favour at the cost of truth and goodness. He was the most outspoken, candid and honest exponent of whatever he believed to be true and good. Hence even in seventies when India was submerged in utter ignorance, superstition, moral and spiritual prostration, when reformer was treated as heretic and claws and teeth were shown to him by thousands, when friendship of years and ties of whole life-time snapped, when even a bold mind dared not raise his axe at the dead crust of the old and accumulated evils, when social boycott—the most horrible of intimidations—stared in the face of the honest thinker and worker, Bhagwan Dev Atma led a violent crusade against all evils including the most time honoured, most deeply cherished and centuries old evils of caste system and food prejudices. In the year 1877, he wrote a long article in support of certain reforms. In the course of that article, Bhagwan wrote as follows (which is a free translation of his Urdu article):—

“Social bars against food and marriage are two such evils in Hindu society as can safely be considered the main and root cause of all other social evils and national degradation and their horrible results. It is a fact that in our various social relations and ties and in our everyday existence these strict social bars of food and marriage have so deeply affected us to our great detriment, that the wise among us simply lament over it and in bitterest terms and shed bitter tears. They most anxiously await the dawn of that blessed day, when our countrymen would awaken to the paralysing horrors of these two evils and break them down. Our people as a rule are ignorant even of the truth of their own religion and of the fact as to how our ancestors, who had distinguished themselves as highly civilised men, looked upon these two matters relating to food and marriage. It is because of this ignorance that the people stand

amazed at our writings and view them as strange. If they were to dive into the mines of their own religious scriptures and care to understand them or refer to a learned Pandit....., they would come to know that food bars and caste bondages, which our countrymen consider as the be-all and end-all of Hindu life, were absolutely non-existent in the life and times of our ancestors, *acharyas* and *rishies*. Our ancestors observed no social distinctions in matters of food. They observed only one distinction irrespective of the position or caste of man and it was, that they boycotted a wicked or foolish man whether he was a Brahman or a Shudra. So far marriage is concerned, they permitted matrimonial relations with all classes and races of people irrespective of the considerations of caste or colour. There are several instances recorded in our literature which show that our people frequently intermarried with those whom we now call Pathans. Pt. Dayanand says so often that Aryans married even American ladies. In short, when once the light of knowledge and civilisation illumined the four corners of our land, such absurdities and such narrow-mindedness shall have no place whatsoever in our social constitution and mutual relations. Their standard of social life was one which the present day educated, learned and patriotic Indians consider most desirable and proper and which they are endeavouring heart and soul to renovate in this land without caring for the favour or frown of the public. It is a thousand pities that owing to the wheel of time having turned adversely the iron lids of darkness should have set so firmly on our eyes that even in spite of our possessing eyes we do not see. The old noble traditions and good usages and customs have vanished from our sight. They look as matters of old forgotten hazy past. Instead of making any progress, we degenerated from the high pedestal of great civilisation and became half civilised or semi-savage."

"But our destiny has again taken a turn for good. It (sun of destiny) had risen from the East in the past and set in the West. But owing to our contact with the British, the sun of destiny has recommenced to cast its rays upon our land. As these rays illumine our hearts, we behold once more our old glory and old conditions and feel enthused to turn our mind to them. We are sanguine that we shall once more see those times again which our hearts hanker after. When India enjoyed in days of yore the benefits of high civilisation and freely permitted intermarriages among all classes and races of people, they observed strictly two most beneficial principles which pertain to marriage. Firstly, nobody got his children married during infancy or minority. Secondly, both the bride and bridegroom after receiving due education exercised the right of selecting a mate for themselves. The result of the observance of these two good principles was that the children of such marriages enjoyed fine physical health and possessed full mental vigour. Because they exercised the right of selection they enjoyed mutual love, trust and comradeship."

"But in our days both these right principles are honoured in

their cruel breach. Child marriage is almost universal. The pair which is bound in life-long wedlock is not permitted to have any voice or right of choice before their marriage. Thus liberty of children even in this, matter is mutilated and cast to winds."

VOICE AGAINST INJUSTICE TO GIRLS.

"So far as education is concerned we find a strange attitude of people manifested towards it. In general man has come to realise the benefits and blessings of education for boys. This is the reason why education among boys is fast developing. But so far as education of girls is concerned, there is not worth the name progress made. The wonder of wonders is that those, who have themselves received education and have therefore personal experience of its blessings show utter lack of interest in the education of their own mates and their own daughters. *It has never dawned on those so-called enlightened people that to educate one-half-of the race and to keep the better half in mental darkness vitiates the universal law of national progress.* This is the reason why the ignorance of women proves harmful to our national will being. We see the effects of this attitude of men towards education of girls. We find that these educated young men who have by some accident escaped the matrimonial bonds having been fastened on them during childhood and chose to remain celibate, or those who happen to lose their first wife, feel themselves at sea when they have to seek a life-long mate for themselves. They feel in their mind that it is not possible for them to lead a happy wedded life, if they link their destiny with an illiterate girl howsoever accomplished in beauty of form and features she may be. They therefore even despair of entering into married life. They as a last resort endeavour to marry a girl from a foreign land. If they fail here too, they live a compulsory celibate life." (Pages 270—74.)

HINDU RELIGION DOES NOT UPHOLD CASTE-SYSTEM.

Again, in the columns of *Bradar-i-Hind* for the month of August, Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote an article on the excellence of Hindu Dharma. In the course of the article, Bhagwan wrote on caste system as under :—

There are many men who labour under a misapprehension that Hindu religion warmly upholds the custom of wrong caste distinctions. But this is far from truth. In the body of *Rig Ved*, we do not come across any such distinction. The Hindu Epic, *Maha Bharat* does make mention of the caste, but it says :—

"This entire world is nothing but *Brahm*. There is no special value attached to *Varan* or caste divisions. In the beginning all has emanated from *Brahm*. It is the deeds that have led to natural divisions of men into classes or castes. It is the conduct, behaviour or *karma* which classified men into groups called castes. In ancient times, four sons of the same father fell into four castes according to their inner life and behaviour. In olden ages, the general conduct of

a man made one man a Brahman, another a Kshatrya, third a Vaish and fourth a Shudra. It is so recorded in Manu."

"Shudra becomes a Brahman and Brahman degrades into Shudra. The Kshatryas and Vaishas are similarly formed."

It is again recorded in *Maha Bharat* :—

"Truth, charity, forgiveness, good behaviour, worship, mercy, etc., wherever found constitute the possessor a true Brahman. The qualities of Shudras are not found in the life of Brahman. *No man by birth becomes a Shudra or a Brahman.*"

Again, in a dialogue between Shiva and Parbati, we find the following :—

"O Devi ! The Shudra becomes a Brahman by doing all the above good deeds and by adopting a noble behaviour or character. A Vaish becomes a Kshatrya if he adopts Kshatrya's calling. O Devi ! One who does all the above good deeds, becomes a pure Brahman even though he is born in a Shudra or low family. A Brahman who associates with impure and wicked souls and becomes a debauchee at once degrades from his high position and becomes a Shudra. O Devi ! Even a son of Shudra is worthy of regard at the hands of Brahman, if he is a conqueror of his low desires and is pure in heart, because it is a commandment of God that a child of Shudra grows superior even to a Brahman if he possesses humane virtues and is of noble character. *Try to bear these my words in heart that no one becomes a Brahman because he is born in the highest family, because he wears a sacred thread, reads Vedic scriptures and is born of some noble father. He is a Brahman who possesses noble character.*"

"It is apparent, therefore, that by noble behaviour man becomes a Brahman. A Shudra can therefore become a Brahman by adopting higher tone of life."

"In pursuance of this noble principle that Hindus in olden ages believed and acted Kans Rishi though born of Shudra parents, was accepted as a Brahman. Bishwamitra a Kshatrya became a Brahman by his noble deeds. Thus our ancient history conclusively proves that there was a time when Hindus had not formed those air-tight and mutually exclusive compartments of caste as are found in the social make-up of the present day Hindus."

Bhagwan not simply preached this reform but lived it in his own life. It was this wonderful harmony in his words and deeds which created in the hearts even of his great opponents an admiration and awe for him.

PROTEST AGAINST UNEQUAL MARRIAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF ARYA SAMAJ WITH A GIRL OF EIGHT OR NINE YEARS.

It was in 1877, that the then President of the Arya Samaj, a distinguished graduate who had lost his wife, married a girl aged only eight or nine years. This conduct of a responsible office-holder and enlightened person who stood ostensibly for social reform deeply

shocked Bhagwan and he published a long article in the form of a dialogue which we freely translate here to give some idea of the higher repulsion that Bhagwan possessed against evils:—

“A—Let me give you an instance. Do you know our President?

“B—Yes, I know him quite well. He enjoys the title of “Afzal Ulma.”

“A—Yes, that is he. I feel that you know him. Recently he married a girl of eight or nine years—a poor child who does not know what is meant by marriage or husband. But because Lalaji had not the courage to break old evil social customs he succumbed to them. And he went so far that though the girl was already betrothed somewhere else, he induced some of his friends to intervene and persuade the girl’s father to break off the first matrimonial tie and give the girl to him. The father did so. Thereafter he invited the girl and her father in some private house and had the marriage ceremony performed secretly. When the ceremony was over, he made his marriage public. Nay, he celebrated it by engaging a musical band to play and by giving a sumptuous feast to his friends.”

“B—This all is amazing. What an example of social reform! What a precedent laid down by a President? But is it not true that Swami Dayanand has declared child marriage as improper? In the pages of the *Satyarth Parkash* he has not only definitely set his face resolutely against such child marriages but he has specifically declared that a marriage with a child of eight or nine is opposed to Vedic injunctions. Knowing all this why did Lalaji who is President of a Society which believes in Vedic revelation and which openly condemns *Purans* as the unacceptable productions of foolish Pandits, follow in his personal life the teachings of the latter? How can a man who with open eyes goes the wrong way lead others to the right path?”

“A—You seem to be very fond of consistency. You require action to harmonise with speech. Come, I tell you something else which would puzzle you still more. Let me tell you the ceremonies which Lalaji passed through (in his unique marriage).”

“B—Out with it, please. Don’t mind my getting puzzled at it.”

“A—Let me tell you then that no reformed Vedic rites were observed on the occasion of marriage. A Brahman was called to read the *mantras* as is the custom among orthodox Hindus.

“B—But is not Hindu system of marriage full of idol-worship?”

“A—Yes, idol-worship was followed. When the orthodox ceremonies were observed worship of idols formed a necessary part.”

“B—How strange! Can we call this conduct as conforming to a good principle? If the President of a Sabha tramples down the principles of that Society, why would members care to observe them? Where is the fun of publishing red handbills and big notices

in papers containing the so-called ten principles, when these principles have to be known in the breach. These ten principles enjoin explicitly on the Arya Samajists that incorporeal God alone is a worthy object of worship and that a member should abjure untruth and accept truth, and all his actions should conform to Dharma on the basis of the right discrimination between truth and untruth. Is it, I ask, consistent with true or Vedic teachings to marry a girl aged only eight or nine years, pay homage to idols, persuade a father to break the old matrimonial tie of a girl in order to have her for himself? Alas by these actions they outrage not only reason but religious and moral principles of life. The people, therefore, who intentionally and with a view to serve selfish interests, trample down moral principle, not only commit a grave sin but drag hundreds by their example into the mire of sin and wrong. The occurrence of such examples is a sign of the misfortune for our country. It is pitiable that those whom our motherland trusts as her liberator and considers them as her filial children who are qualified in every way to help forward her cause and break her bonds (they—these children—), should go so far as to degrade themselves by their own personal example of lack of morals, and retard her progress. It is the conduct of such fallen sons that mother India laments in plaintive notes with eyes streaming with tears and hair dishevelled."

There follows the *Syappa* (lamentations) of mother India.

AN APPEAL TO THE EDUCATED YOUNG MEN OF OUR COUNTRY.

In the month of January 1876, Bhagwan Dev Atma published an interesting and informing article on the customs of the Punjab. In the course of this article, Bhagwan wrote :—

"Those who are educated and possess the sense of discrimination between what is good and what is bad, are bound, in duty, to unite themselves and create conditions for eradication of those evil social customs which obstruct our progress in civilisation and morals. Oh! ye young men of India! how long will you sleep a sleep of indifference? Wake up! ye who understand the nature of civilisation and march forward. He is not a soldier who wears arms for decoration and not for use in battle. If all your knowledge of right and wrong was intended as a lesson to be recited before a teacher or as a mere subject of a debate within four walls of school or college or only to fill up the pages of examination answer-books as a sort of essay; and if all your written discourses on the evils of early marriage, etc., were meant to get you marks in a University examination, you in fact behave like a soldier who fights no battle and wears his arms as a mere decoration. Nay, you do not reap the true harvest of education which is intended to develop in you true love for your country and true sympathy. Remember, you will stand arraigned before the bar of your country for all those evil social customs which you were bound to try to eradicate but you did not. This unfortunate land, this degraded and uncivilised

nation is looking with wistful eyes to you to help them out of these sloughs. Does not your heart melt at their mute appeal? Is your heart so hardened that it stands unaffected at the sight of the horrors due to these evil customs? Is your heart so void of sympathy that it cannot burst into a flame at the agonising sight of the decline of your nation? Oh Indians! have mercy on this helpless and impoverished condition of your country. Think out the means and work them out so that we may not be an object of contempt and ridicule for civilised races and this our land may attain to that position of power and dignity to which various European nations have reached." (Pages 10—13).

HOW FAR IS IT INCUMBENT UPON US TO OBSERVE ANY SOCIAL CUSTOM.

It was in the month of May 1876, that Bhagwan contributed a learned and original article on the above subject. It provides us with a standard to judge the propriety or impropriety of observing any prevalent custom and even testing its nature and its conformity to right principles. Writes Bhagwan :—

"Customs are of two kinds. There are firstly those which the society as a body has established as proper to meet any expediency or any emergency. There are secondly those which have sprung up in the social body by themselves as a result of man's indifference, negligence or want of attention. *There is no doubt that those customs which have come into vogue either as a result of conscious and deliberate act of the society or by themselves, have a binding force on us if they meet the just requirements of social well-being or conform to time and place, and are besides that neither sinful nor criminal*, but, as opposed to this, no individual is bound to conform to such customs, usages or practices which are not wanted to meet the needs of time, place or occasion and are positively sinful, criminal or harmful."

"There are customs which are confined to one place, one family or one community. There are again those customs which are prevalent in a nation and affect the whole country. But whether a custom is local, provincial or national, whether it affects one family, one community, one race or one nation, it is not at all obligatory on any person who is truly a human being to follow it if its observance leads to any sin, crime or wrong. This is such a simple, plain and unvarnished truth that even a man of street can with facility comprehend it. Do we not see that if there is any custom which is not found in our own family or community but prevails in any other family or community and is on the face of it sinful and criminal, we feel a certain amount of abhorrence for it. As for an example when we hear that among certain sections of Rajput families a custom of infanticide is prevalent according to which the parents kill a girl child merely because they consider it degrading to be called fathers-in-law or brothers-in-law of somebody, do we not feel it outrageous? The very thought how the little innocent

being is done to death creates a sickening sensation in us. Our hair stand on end. Our whole frame trembles at the monstrosity of the action of these inhuman parents. We feel a certain amount of repulsion for such a horrible deed of these so-called human beings. A man possessing true higher feeling of sympathy would not bear the sight of such callous murders."

"This one illustration is enough to give us a measure of all such customs which are of like nature and which breed sin or crime and dislodge a man from his high position of a human being. Where is a man of common sense or wisdom who would counsel another to pursue the profession or custom of dacoity merely because all his ancestors have followed it? Where would you find a sensible man who would ask a child of criminal tribe to adopt the calling or custom of theft merely because his ancestors followed it as a matter of course? My Indian countrymen! you can easily find out which customs are harmless, sinless and therefore worthy of being followed and which are those customs current among our society that breed sin, generate harm, bring about our degradation and harm our social well-being and even cast us into the eddies of spiritual darkness."

ENFORCED WIDOWHOOD.

"Out of that group of customs which are based on sin is one which we term enforced widowhood, *i.e.*, refusing equal right of remarriage to a widow which is given to man under the same circumstances. Your accepted *Shastras* sanction it. Your own conscience endorses it. But in the face of all this you deny a widow this birthright because of the influence on you of this evil social custom. You are guilty of a grave sin which not only earns you the curses of the oppressed widows and their sighs and lamentations and which degrade you spiritually, but on this very earth you earn disgrace and infamy which it is difficult to paint in words. My friends, why in the garb of human beings are you trampling upon reason and sense of discrimination? Why do you sanction this callous behaviour in relation to these oppressed creatures with such supreme indifference and such thoughtlessness of the consequences you reap in this world and the next? Ye people! are your hearts so void of sympathy and your intellects so void of reason that you do not understand even what is sympathy and what is true shame? In that case all your worship is in vain. Your so-called *Ahinsa* (*i.e.*, mercy towards animals) and consequent abstinence from meat-eating, your frequent spitting when you see, while passing, exposed pieces of animal flesh on the shops of butchers and all your attempts to close your eyes to avoid seeing the ghastly sight, your attempts to drink water after distilling it, your care to walk carefully on the ground for the fear of trampling upon any insect, your these and such other scruples are nothing but sheer hypocrisy. Who is going to believe that you possess any true sympathy for animal life when you show its utter absence in your conduct towards your own dear fellow human beings? Outwardly

you look gentle like a lamb, but in fact your hearts are stony. We wonder how the sense of shame and true humanity have boycotted this land. We fail to see what fun you seem to find in leading such a life which is void of true sense of shame and true humanity and that you are not able to cast it off and thus avoid disgrace and ill fame which it brings. Ye educated people of our land! remember, that all your fine coats, pantaloons, ties, wrist watches and other fashionable things would not make you men so long as you possess no true chivalry in relation to these down-trodden women of your land, and show no moral courage to break down the chains of evil social customs. Is it not true that there are lots of things which were prohibited by your caste, and yet some of them you have adopted openly and some you have adopted secretly? When you have done all this, is it not shameful on your part to feel no mercy towards these oppressed beings and thus adopt the evil social path? Remember that when you are enjoying a festive occasion in one corner of your house with many of you friends, there sits in another corner a widowed sister of yours, hardly fifteen or sixteen years of age, who is filling the atmosphere with the heavy laden sighs of her agonised heart, and is drenching the floor with the flood of tears, but you are not able to listen to her sighs and see her tears as you are drunken and hence insane. Is all this the net result of your education? Can we not say that in fact you have received no true education at all which alone makes man a true human being? This is apparent from your words and actions which show you indefinitely inferior to the so-called illiterate people. It is true that it is easy to slide down the path of sensual life. But it is an uphill task to go against it. You could easily accept all such practices, however opposed to your current customs and received traditions, which purport to pander to your sensual comforts and afford you sensual joy. But you show absolute bankruptcy of manliness in following a course of conduct, however proper and right and however necessary, if it does not conform with your sensual nature. It is indeed thousand pities that true sympathy and true nobility of heart, which might enable a man to forget his self in the cause of betterment of others, cannot grow in any heart save under the influences of true religion. Education, as is ordinarily given, is able no doubt to show to man, to some extent, his duties and responsibilities, but it is absolutely incompetent to kindle that flame in the heart of man which may help him to forget his personal wants and troubles in his effort to remove the wants and redress the grievances of others, which may fill him with noble resolves and may make his steps firm in the noble path. All these can be evolved by true religiousness. This is the reason why it is very rare that we come across men who prefer sacrifice of sensual pleasures and comforts to acquiring that true religiousness, and who merge their own interests and own welfare in the higher interests and higher welfare of others. *You can never expect from a world-worshipper a spirit of doing good to others.* If he does any good to others, the motive behind it is fame or praise or some

worldly interest. *The true sympathy does not germinate in the heart of a world worshipper.* Can you expect from him who shows no sympathy at all even to remove the miseries of those suffering agonies within his very sight, that he would manifest true sympathy for those (out of sight) from him."

Very pertinently, Bhagwan Dev Atma remarked :—

"He who has no sympathy for mankind is a liar if he claims love for God ; for a true test of God-worship is sympathy for mankind. This is the touchstone which discriminates false from true worship of God."

We can find from this that mere God-worship was of no value in the eyes of Bhagwan Dev Atma even when he believed in God. As his soul was possessed of the unique forces of love of goodness, nothing that savoured of compromise with evil, appealed to his heart at all. He could not admire a man for any profession of God-worship or any amount of devotional ecstasy in God's name, if he saw in his daily conduct absolute callousness towards suffering fellow human beings whom he has the means to help.

WHO IS ABLE TO BREAK OFF AN EVIL SOCIAL CUSTOM.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

"There are some people who consider it wrong and pernicious to prohibit widows from remarrying if they chose. But these men lack that soul power or spiritual force which might enable them to let their reason and conscience override all considerations of social bonds, and charge them with power to even renounce their community and pass through the fire of temporary suffering in the path of higher reform. The readers of our journal ought to bear in mind that the factor that counts in the way of realising our wishes is our own individual power. They, therefore, would without the least hesitation, brush aside all considerations of their community in the matters of evil social bonds and dissociate themselves from all such customs as make them sinful and add to their spiritual darkness who have, by divine love, developed spiritual power or moral force to such an extent that a mere sight of misery in others makes them forget their own personal woes or sufferings. The truly brave and heroic souls who know no fear, do not show courage in battle at mere command of their leader or commander. It is their own nature, their own temperament which fires them up at the hour of battle and braces them up to risk even their most precious lives. It is these brave souls who proclaim that they are not from among those who show their back in battle, but they belong to that heroic band who would lay their very life in the field. This example of true spiritual courage illustrates what we call religious life. When the flame of this purity and religiosity flares up in the heart of a religious soul, it becomes impossible for him to compromise with any custom, usage or tradition, however hoary or widely held it may be, if it leads to sin or

evil. He boldly faces all opposition, all calamities and sufferings which his bold defiance of evil customs may bring on his devoted head. For, he is not at all so much afraid of any amount of worldly troubles and woes, as he is afraid of sin or evil and at no cost is he prepared to corrupt his soul. As a worldly man, afraid of his society is not able to associate with any good act which is opposed to the views of his community, similarly a true religious man is not able to associate with any evil, sin or crime for fear of degrading his soul. It is invariably observed that whenever an evil social custom is renounced and a good reform is introduced in any clime or country, the pioneers in the battle have always been those souls whom we call truly religious (*Deendar*)."

What is required of a true man.

At another place in the same article, Bhagwan Dev Atma writes :—

"When any epidemic, say cholera, breaks out in any country the Government of the land issues peremptory orders to the medical officers to take immediate measures to stop the ravages made by it. A good-hearted doctor receives the mandate and finds it impossible to sit at home though there is fear of his life. He sees that lives of thousands are in immediate peril. He forgets himself. Nay, even when a fear of any prospective loss of his own most precious life stares him in the face, he brushes it aside and values his own dear life much less than the lives of others. Even when by an accident he really loses his life, he wins the unstinted admiration and reverence and no reproach or blame at the hands of people in general. Hence oh ye people of Hind! there is time for such of you who consider enforced widowhood as a dark sin and grave wrong, to gird up your loins and wage war against this terrible epidemic like a good and noble-hearted doctor. It is derogatory to our manhood to show our back in the hour of war, in the field of battle. Welcome any excommunication which your community may pass on you, if by your sacrifice even ten oppressed widows find freedom. *Remember! he is a man who lays down his very life in the path of truth and righteousness.* Time shall pass away all the same whether you stand forth for the cause of the oppressed or stand lukewarm. But the record is left behind. Enforced widowhood is not only sinful but it is productive of great shame and disgrace for our society. Scores of cases crop up in courts which besides leading to disgrace hold an unforgettable lesson for us to learn, and those who are affected by it see no other way for themselves but to bid eternal farewell to this evil custom."

UPLIFT WORK.

Bhagwan Dev Atma created a stir in the public life of Punjab not merely by pen but by propagating higher life and higher truths by means of sermons, conversations, public lectures and addresses. On page 59 of his Autobiography, Part I, we find description of those unique motive forces which imperiously led him on to make the best contribution in the cause of human uplift. He writes :—

“ The feelings of sympathy for and service of others had already awakened and developed in me. Hence on witnessing around me thousands and millions of souls sunk in the mire of false beliefs or creeds and most pernicious social customs and usages, I felt an overmastering urge in my heart to bestir myself and to extend the light of truth as far as I had myself got it. This was the reason for my starting two journals in 1875, one in Hindi and the other in Urdu. Besides writing for these papers I began delivering lectures and addresses.”

We confined ourselves in the last few chapters to his journalistic venture. We gave a few instances of his service of his land by holding public meetings and private discourses. Bhagwan being a teacher in Government School, got summer vacation. But this period he did not spend as *do-nothing* holidays or recreation time for attending to some worldly object. His one passion was to rescue mankind from evil, wrong and untruth as far as he himself possessed the light and to grow in them feelings of true higher life.

In the month of August 1879, Bhagwan had a long summer vacation. This is how he spent it :—

“ During his August vacation, Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri went to Multan with his family members. He stopped there for about three weeks. He delivered two public lectures there, one on “ Our real weakness ” and the second on another subject.

There was a large audience which mustered strong there to listen to him. Besides these, he held three worship meetings in which he delivered highly illuminating addresses. Even Shrimati Agnihotri (revered wife of Bhagwan Dev Atma) held two worship meetings for the benefit of the ladies besides holding private discourses with them and delivering addresses. In the worship meetings that she conducted 30 ladies attended.”

Let us hasten to add that during these days Bhagwan belonged to Brahmo faith and was its *Acharya*. At Multan too he had gone as Brahmo missionary. There were some few Brahmos there who possessed fervour for their faith and for whose benefit Bhagwan had gone there. He writes about them :—

"The members of the Brahmo Samaj though few in number are full of life and energy. Two or three leading members possess keen feelings for their own amelioration and for the welfare of their country. They possess noble spirit of co-operating with every form of activity intended for general and public good. Luckily those members of the Brahmo Samaj who live in cantonment have their residential quarters in the same locality and neighbourhood and have therefore frequent occasions of meeting one another. This proximity of residence is helpful and extremely desirable as it not only brings them closer and develop social amity and goodwill among them but gives them greater chances and scope for joint deliberations on any good work and scheme of public service and joint action. The local Samaj has started a girls' school and a reading room which receives papers in Urdu, Hindi, English, etc. The members are collecting funds for erecting a *Mandir* there and it is expected that it would be an accomplished fact in the near future."

This was the bright side of the life of Brahmo Samajists at Multan which Bhagwan brought in forefront before his readers. But he never desisted from exposing defects in order to draw pointed attention of his people and others to their removal. Hence Bhagwan wrote about them :—

"But there is one matter which is extremely painful and sad, and it is this. In common with other Indians the members of the Brahmo Samaj at Multan are woefully indifferent to the problem of improving the lot of their women folk. As yet they have not awakened from their dead slumber in this connection. *They do not realise the fact that our land would never march on the way to progress so long as our women do not come forward with the key in their hands to open wide the gateway of our uplift.* This key with which our women folk can help forward our cause is their own education. This education is possible only when they are given equal rights and equal opportunities for progress. We feel sure that men would consider it impolitic and unwise to any longer continue indifferent to this great truth and most glorious secret, and would pay full attention to the education of their ladies."

Again as soon as Bhagwan returned from Multan, he went to Amritsar and delivered a lecture there in the Government School which was largely attended by the general public; held one religious meeting in the house of Babu Shiv Chandra Sen where also many a person flocked to hear him. (*Vide Bradar-i-Hind* October 1879, page 318—320).

It was again in the month of February 1880, that Brahmo Samaj of Amritsar celebrated its first anniversary. Bhagwan Dev Atma at the young age of thirty was already at the helm of the Brahmo Samaj affairs. Hence, the entire burden of carrying on the deliberations and engagements in this connection to a satisfactory conclusion naturally fell on him. We find in the columns of *The Brother of India*, following informing para :—

"At Amritsar, the first anniversary of the Brahmo Samaj was celebrated on the 29th of February, 1880. Many members of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj attended the occasion. Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri—Pracharak Sadharan Brahmo Samaj—delivered in the Town Hall a day before (*i.e.*, on 28th) a public lecture on "The Religion of Nine-teenth Century." He traced the history of the growth of religion from the dawn of man up to the present times by profuse quotations from historical records and showed how with time religion has been winnowed of the chaff of many false beliefs and false superstitions and is growing by accumulated treasure of truth into something really delightful and fine."

"In the end he appealed to the audience not to treat with indifference the net result of the labours of mankind extending over hundreds and thousands of years which was a priceless treasure won by the sacrifices made for it by millions of men, and that they should avail themselves of the great chance opened before them for their own highest good and the highest good of their own future generations."

How Bhagwan's programme for 29th was crowded can be clear from the following note :—

"The day began with holding *kirtan* for some time when Pandit Sahib delivered a sermon and then an address which he made interesting by profuse quotations from Upnishads. Then at noon there were readings from Sikh scriptures. This lasted for one hour. Thereafter for two hours a conference was held for the propagation of religion. After a short interval, *Nagar Kirtan* was held. In the evening, Pandit Sahib delivered a lecture, near Town Hall in an open garden to all those persons who had mustered strong there to listen to the singing of hymns and music. The subject of this lecture was "Need of Religion."

Again at page 191 of the same journal, we find a general notice which announces the organisation of Central Punjab Brahmo Samaj and makes the following Public declaration :—

"Every Saturday a meeting in connection with worship is being held in the house of Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri, under the auspices of the Brahmo Samaj. In this meeting lectures too are delivered. Every gentleman is invited to attend irrespective of the considerations of his caste or creed."

At page 246 of the same journal, we read :—

"In the month of July 1880, Pt. Shiv Narain Agnihotri, missionary Brahmo Samaj, had gone to Multan and Amritsar—two important centres—for the purpose of propagation of religion. A short account of his labours we insert here for the benefit of our readers."

We refrain from quoting the entire report for want of space. But to what extent the public appreciated Bhagwan's labours is somewhat evident some from the following note published by a non-

Brahmo editor of a non-Brahmo paper, *Safir-i-Hind*. This note was published in its issue of 17th July, 1880 :—

“ Pandit Shiv Narain Sahib Agnihotri—Drawing Master, Government High School, Lahore, editor, *Bradar-i-Hind* and missionary of the Brahmo Samaj—who is a capable, pious and well-meaning gentleman, delivered here at Amritsar, on 10th of this month, a lecture on “What is Religion?” On the 11th he delivered another public lecture and on the 12th he addressed a public meeting on “Nature of Revelation.” We were not personally present in his first lecture. But we were present when he addressed the public on the “Nature of Revelation.” The subject was common enough. But it was handled in most learned and refined manner. The audience heard it with rapt attention and felt delighted. This address treated a subject vast in its nature and delicate to handle. The speech of the most learned Pandit was very frank and unequivocal. In our humble opinion, we feel that there cannot be two opinions about what he said. We are believers in revelation (*i.e.*, book revelation). But we can say that it was not easy to differ from Panditji—the way he dealt with the subject. If the learned Pandit were to reduce his lecture into a book form and publish it, it is bound to benefit the public.”

It is not every man who can elicit from an opponent the above admission and appreciation on such a delicate subject as book revelation—in which Bhagwan had no faith—and which forms the belief of the over-whelmingly great portion of thiests whether Hindus, Mohamedans, Sikhs, Christians and others. *Bhagwan in fact broke new ground in the public life of the Punjab by popularising platform addresses, and by propagation on a vast scale both by pen and speech.* He was the pioneer who paved the way for all that. His extraordinary powers, added to the most singular eloquence he possessed, attracted audience in vast numbers and as the editor of *Safir-i-Hind* remarked it was not easy to differ from him when one heard him unbiasedly.

How Bhagwan used to crowd his programme even of a single day can be evident from the following brief note :—

“ On 3rd October, 1880, Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri went to Amritsar for propagation work. As soon as he reached there, he began, at about 11 a.m., worship and prayer meetings. He delivered an address also. Again at about 2 p.m., he began religious conference which lasted up to half past five. Some time after when the shades of evening fell, he delivered a public lecture in the spacious open yard of Durbar Sahib in which he dealt, for a considerable time, on spiritual life in most felicitous and easy terms so that all could understand him. It must have benefited those present.”

How Bhagwan passed his time at Lahore in the service of the cause he loved, can, to some extent, be known from a short review of his activities in February 1881, published in the form of notes in the

Bradar-i-Hind, of 1881, page 86 :—

“The weekly lectures which Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri delivered in the Central Brahmo Samaj had the following for their subject :—

“Is God near to us or distant from us? (2) A natural longing in every human soul for peace and the way to attain it. (3) God does not abandon us if we do not renounce Him. (4) Worship God with love.”

This was a time when Bhagwan believed in God as a living being and controlling human destinies. However after several years of observation, experience, experiment and growing inward light, he realised it to be a huge delusion and he endeavoured hard to rescue mankind from this false belief.

The following subjects formed the matter of discussion in the “Bhratri Sammelan Sabha.” These meetings were held every Friday :—

“What are the obstacles in the path of our social progress? (2) Why do the people of our land deal in untruth and how can this evil be eradicated? (3) Why are the people of our land so cruel and unjust? What are the ways and means to make them justice-loving.”

“On the 16th February an anniversary of Theosophical Society class was held in the house of Babu Navin Chandra Roy. Pandit Shiv Narain spoke in the meeting and *said that it was opposed to moral principles to show indifference to all such matters of the Brahmo Samaj which form the basis of the betterment of the society* and to call that attitude the love for independence. No God-worshipper, be he a Brahmo, can be independent of moral principles. It is not right for any man to say, when the question of accepting a truth or principle is involved, that he is free to accept or reject it. It is possible that a man may be too weak to practise a truth but it is incumbent on him to accept truth and support it. With belief in God, every believer is pledged to say that he would love God and follow His commandments. To observe moral principles is to act in conformity with the will of God.”

Again on Sunday, the 28th February, a *Shradh* ceremony was held in relation to the late Babu Madhu Sudan Chakarvarty. This ceremony was presided over by Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri. He offered prayers and then delivered an address on a scriptural text from Upanishadas. The subject of his address was :—

“Know God who is most worthy of knowledge, so that you may get salvation from the pain of death.”

After this address, Bhagwan spoke to Madhu Sudan's brother on the sacredness of the fraternal tie which binds brothers and sisters and the void of that love and regard which he must feel by the death of his brother. He, then, carried consolation to his aching heart. The

ceremony was concluded with a common prayer for the benefit of the departed soul.

This briefest possible note on the activities of Bhagwan Dev Atma can convey to our readers, at least this much idea that the programme of public service of Bhagwan was always full and that he was indispensable to his society, on all occasions whether of marriages or deaths, or weekly or other meetings, in prayer hall, or on platform, and to all others.

Bhagwan Dev Atma not only shepherded the souls of Brahmo flock and delivered any number of public lectures and addresses on the beauty and indispensability of religion, but he was ever ready to take up the gauntlet flung at his Samaj. He was the writer of the Brahmo Samaj. He was the speaker of the Brahmo Samaj. He was the preacher of the Brahmo Samaj. He, as a rule, presided at its marriage or other functions. He even presided at their death ceremonies. He was always in the forefront as exponent of Brahmo faith to the world. He was its defender. Hence, when an Indian Christian missionary, Mr. Nilkanth, delivered a lecture in Mission School in which, through ignorance, he raised some objections to Brahmo faith, Bhagwan Dev Atma did not let this challenge go unanswered. On 7th March, 1881, he announced and delivered a public lecture to a big audience in the Brahmo Mandir Hall in order to give a reply to the objections raised against and to enlighten the public on the nature of the Brahmo faith. Mr. Nilkanth accompanied by another missionary also attended the lecture. Bhagwan expressed great wonder that though Brahmo faith had been in existence for over half a century, men and specially Christian missionaries who had come to India to preach religion, were as a rule ignorant of its nature and teachings. Bhagwan said :—

“Men as a rule are ignorant of what religion in fact is. Those few who have got some knowledge about its nature, are not able to comprehend the means to attain it, because of want of light or of higher education. There was a time in the history of Greek civilisation when some of its philosophers taught that by reason man was not competent even to get knowledge of material things not to say of the intricacies of religion. But those days are gone. *In these days reason has absolute jurisdiction over all sciences*, and observation and experiment are accepted as the methods of investigation. *In the world of religion we find to our great pain the limited vision as of old that reason has nothing to do with religion.* But the day has dawned when the mankind would avail itself fully of the benefits and guidance of God-given light of reason and not turn their back upon it as that would expose them to the charge of ingratitude towards God who has given them this great boon. Even before this, unconsciously they have been accepting guidance of reason without acknowledging due debt to it. Let us hope they would no longer revolt against it and thus grope in the darkness of ignorance.”

After these preliminary but very necessary remarks, Bhagwan Dev Atma described, as a Brahmo, the four special characteristics of

Brahmo faith which distinguished it from all other religions of the world.

Bhagwan continued to spread far and wide the light that he had got, by means of public speeches. We find in the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* several short notes on series of lectures that Bhagwan Dev Atma delivered in various places. In the journal dated January 1882, we find that on the 14th and the 18th December, 1881, Bhagwan delivered two lectures in Central Punjab Brahmo Samaj on "Faith in God" and "Brahm Jiwan." Again we find that in the month of February 1882, Bhagwan delivered series of lectures on "Concentration," "Contemplation of God," "The One Thing Essential," and "Power of Faith." Again on the occasion of the anniversary of erection of Brahmo Mandir held from 23rd to 26th, Bhagwan conducted a worship meeting and delivered a sermon on "The New Life of Soul."

What is meant by New Life of Soul ?

Bhagwan said "The life that is ordinarily lived by men in which lower desires rule supreme is not all what is meant by new life of soul. This new or higher life does not develop in man so long as he possesses no unshakable and true faith in the divinity of God. What is meant by faith? *Those who believe in the existence of God or who deny such existence live practically the same kind of life. Hence they are both alike. Till a true abiding faith develops in man, his lip profession of faith in God would not avail. By true faith in God, we mean the observation of the inner divinity of Godhead. It is sad that only a few out of millions attain to this true faith.....* This Mandir has been in existence for the last ten years. Let every Brahmo member—man or woman—review his or her life and find out how far he has realised in his life the true object of the Brahmo Samaj according to principles laid down by the society. On the right reply to this introspection of our inner life rests the future progress of our souls. *The progress of Brahmo Samaj does not depend so much on the beauty of its principles as on the life lived by its members.*"

Though Bhagwan Dev Atma believed in God and at that time mistakenly believed that the unique life that he lived was nothing but a reflection of God's inner life in him, he had caught the fact that all that was needed was change of life. He abhorred the life dominated by lower desires, lower passions, lower ideals and darkness about soul. He himself lived a singular life whose motive forces were extreme sympathy for the suffering souls and love for truth and goodness. This life he called new life. He called upon his Brahmo friends and mankind to partake of the blessings of this new life.

DEEP FEELING FOR WOMEN.

In the year 1875, Bhagwan wrote a very long article on Hindu religion and polity. In the course of that article, published in the

August issue of *Bradar-i-Hind*, he remarked :—

“ Those of our educated friends, who are anxious to introduce in their families the blessings of civilisation, ought to feel more earnest about the educational uplift of women than of men. If they do so, we are certain that all their dreams about having a civilised home would be more than realised.”

It was in the year 1876 that Bhagwan came to know of a society started at Poona by women for the uplift of their sex. It is elevating to read how Bhagwan grew enthusiastic over it and gave the news a prominent place in his paper. Bhagwan wrote :—

“ It is with feeling of extreme joy that we convey to all those men and women of our land who feel interest in the cause of the uplift of Indian womanhood, the most happy news that at Poona our Indian sisters have by their own independent efforts started a society for the elevation of their own sex. We feel certain that our readers interested in the uplift of their ignorant sisters would feel as deeply delighted as we ourselves have felt when we came to know of it. *The chief thing which has given us immense satisfaction is that all the leaders of this movement are women.* Their main object in starting this society is to liberate their sisters from that most deplorable state to which their ignorance and want of education have reduced them and raise them to the status of true womanhood. The membership of this society is open only to such women as are above the age of eighteen and are able to fluently read and write in their Vernacular. The proceedings of the society are held in Marhatti language. The society has kept before itself the following aims :—

1. Reformation and progress of the existing girls' institutions.
2. Arranging to found institutions at places where they do not as yet exist.
3. Arranging to educate in their own houses such of the women who are anxious to receive the blessings of education but are not able to avail themselves of the benefits of Government institutions owing to their own biases or received customs and traditions.
4. Arranging to provide means for such of the women who are destitute or who are not able, because of any physical defect, to earn their own livelihood.
5. Reforming of such of the evils rampant in their sex because of their rank ignorance.
6. Attending to all other such activities as lead to general progress.”

Bhagwan concluded this article with a deep prayer that the society may be blessed, may have a long and honoured career and its efforts be crowned with full success.

REMOVING OF EARLY MARRIAGE.

It is strange that an Act known as Sarda Act has been passed



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA

so late as in the year 1929. We are surprised to read in the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for the year 1876 that even in that year some well-wishers of our land including Bhagwan agitated for the passing of an Act in Legislature, prohibiting by law the plague of early marriage. We read in the July issue of the same paper :—

“The idea of abolishing the custom of early marriage is getting stronger in the hearts of our people. Even English papers have turned their attention to this needful reform. Our distinguished contemporary *Friend of India* which is a paper of great standing and which wields an amount of influence in our land, has on several occasions expressed its strong opinion in favour of the reform. The talented editor of this journal, writes to say that though the reform of this evil custom is mainly the job of Indians themselves, the Government too is bound to help in the abolition of this evil custom and should not confine its help only in some outward expressions but *should pass an Act*, as without any legislative measure complete success is impossible.

“In Bengal too there are signs visible, among the educated classes, of agitation against this custom. It is however regrettable that the efforts made by them are sporadic and not sustained. The enthusiasm shown by the educated, cools down quickly because of their moral weakness and want of courage. The editor of the *Indian Mirror* has called upon writers not to content themselves with having agitated it once or twice. They should persist in the fight and should not cease their efforts till they have destroyed the evil custom, root and branch.

“Even in *Bombay Gazette*, we read a memorial on this subject having been prepared and submitted by a distinguished gentleman of Ahmedabad to the Government of Bombay. This personage is by faith a Jain, and has definitely put in there that his religion does not favour child marriage and that this evil custom has prevailed amongst them owing to their sheer ignorance. He has prayed in the memorial that the Local Government should be pleased to pass some legislative Act as only a legal measure can effectively cure India of this almost universally prevalent epidemic. The distinguished petitioner has assured the Government that the educated Indians being aware of the fact that this custom is opposed both to justice and common sense, consider it most harmful to the people of India and productive of any amount of evil. Even *Friend of India* has written in most unequivocal terms that the time is ripe now when the Government should no longer keep silent over this most pernicious evil and by consultation with Indians about the minimum age of marriage, should pass a legislative measure penalising early marriage. This is only one way of curing this land of this plague epidemic.”

Bhagwan concludes thus :—

“There is no doubt that the general mass in India is indifferent, because of rank ignorance, to helping forward the cause of women.

But time shall come when Indians themselves would realise the extreme gravity of the situation and learn to respect and honour the rights and claims of women. We would pray that such a day may dawn soon."

OUR BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS OUR WOMEN.

How Bhagwan Dev Atma felt even in the year 1876 about the unequal treatment meted out to our womenfolk, can be gathered from the following words of his. It was in the month of July 1876 that Miss Breton, an English lady missionary, delivered a speech in a public meeting in which she said :—

"Babus of Bengal when judged from their costly and rich dresses, etc., seem to live the life of a prince but most deplorable indeed is the condition of their women. They are provided with nothing but a single *dhoti* to cover their body and shame which must be costing hardly rupees ten a year to them."

Several persons in the audience were moved to tears by her pathetic advocacy of women of our land. Bhagwan wrote on this :—

"We endorse every word of Miss Breton and express our deep pain that our treatment of our women should be so brutal and so callous. We welcome from other races as strong a criticism of our tyranny to our women as is possible for them to express. This indecent and heartless behaviour to our women is not confined to Bengal alone but it is a common scourge of our land. Oh! when would that day come when our countrymen would accord to their women due respect and show that women also possess soul."

DUTY OF HUSBAND TOWARDS HIS WIFE.

It is sometimes curious to study how our countrymen had to wade through the mire of absurd ideas even on the problem of women education. As Bhagwan Dev Atma stood in those days, (*i.e.*, seventies) as the fearless champion of all kinds of reform including education and uplift of women, several men consulted him off and on, on several subjects including education of women. Some questions came as a great surprise to Bhagwan himself. He wrote in *Bradar-i-Hind* for December 1878 :—

"A large majority of even educated men of our land labour under this superstitious fear if at all it is good to give education to women, whether husband has any (moral) sanction to give education to his own wife? Some time ago, a gentleman carried on correspondence with us on this question and when we convinced him by cogent reasons that husband could educate his wife, he was won over. He very earnestly and fondly took to imparting education to his wife. Some time later, he wrote to us to say that having taken permission from us, he had begun to teach his wife and she had advanced so far as to be able to successfully read herself the books like. (1) Four volumes on female education.

(2) Prem Sagar. (3) Bishnu Sahasr Nam. (4) Shrimad Bhagwat, etc. The people of his temperament are thousand times better than those who in spite of the light carried to them on the subject, pay no attention to the uplift of their own women and in spite of the very close and intimate relation which, as husbands, they bear to their wives, they show, because of their selfishness, utter indifference to the real welfare of their dear partners. This conduct is an outrage on humanitarian principles."

THE PRESENT-DAY CONDITION OF WOMEN.

Bhagwan did not confine himself only to pen in popularising the cause of female education and uplift. He was known then and for many years thereafter as the greatest orator of the Punjab. He utilised his wonderfully eloquent powers of speech in the service of the cause of women also. Wherever he stood to speak he commanded mammoth audiences in those days. We read in the columns of *Bradar-i-Hind* for February 1879 the following paragraph :—

"Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri delivered in "Shiksha Sabha" Hall a lecture on "The present-day condition of women." People rushed to hear him in such huge numbers that there was hardly any room left in both halls which were full to extreme. Maulana Mohammad Latif, Editor *Akhbar Anjuman* took down the notes in full of the lecture and having arranged them thereafter published them in his own paper of 24th January."

"MY JOY KNOWS NO BOUND TO SEE AN INDIAN LADY ON A PUBLIC PLATFORM TO ADDRESS HER COUNTRYMEN "

On account of his love for goodness, Bhagwan felt divine joy and most sacred enthusiasm when he saw any lady having climbed high on the ladder of progress. We read the following in the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for February 1879 :—

"A pretty long time ago, we had given news in the columns of our paper about the arrival in our midst of a Marhatta lady. During her stay here, some gentlemen had her audience too and thus had personal experience of her ability and attainments. This lady is now in Calcutta. And as the phrase goes in our land that jeweller alone can appreciate the value of jewels, this lady has received such an ovation in Calcutta as was beyond our imagination. She is a young woman hardly aged twenty or twenty-two years. But her mastery in Sanskrit language is so great that even the greatest Pandits of Calcutta tender her their unstinted admiration. Looking to the number of meetings that have been arranged for her in the houses of the learned and the rich people of Calcutta, one can safely opine that she has made a deep impression on the public mind by her ability as a Sanskrit scholar and specially her genius in poetry. She composes spontaneously and at the spur of moment, poems in Sanskrit on any subject proposed to her. Lately she has given proof of another trait in her. She was invited to a "Literary Club"

of Calcutta to deliver a lecture in Hindi on the advantages of education. It is reported that her address was very learned and interesting. But be that as it may, *the one thing that has filled us with joy which knows no bounds is the sight of an Indian woman delivering an address on a public platform.* It is true that if an old orthodox man were to be informed of the fact that a lady stood before the public on a public platform and expressed her views, he would feel simply stunned and get petrified. He would not be able even to comprehend the truth of the statement. But time is a great reformer. However much we may obstinately lag behind but the lash of time whips the world on its forward march.

“When will that day come when millions of our sisters, enveloped, now as they are, in the folds of the inky darkness of fearful night and lying prone and motionless in the grip of the paralysing ignorance, would awaken and bestir themselves and would banish all darkness and shake off all chill of ignorance by the brilliant light of the luminary of knowledge. May God hasten that day.”

Bhagwan ! thy herculean efforts hastened that day as no other single man's effort could have done. Thou wert the first to start a Hindu Girls' High School in the Punjab which became a mother institution for others. Thou gavest to the Punjab the first Hindu B.A., B.T. Thou gavest to the Punjab the first Hindu M.B., B.S. In thy own society, thou wert pleased to see that no woman is left uneducated. Hence leaving few hopeless exceptions, thy society as compared to all other Indian societies is the only society that presents by far the largest percentage of educated women in it. In thy society, woman enjoys all the privileges and opportunities of progress and no door is closed against her. Men and women enjoy equal rights and privileges in all departments of life. Thy service to the cause of women is sublime.

“OUR GIRLS ARE IN NO WAY INFERIOR TO OUR BOYS IN MENTAL ABILITY.”

In the February 1879 issue of his journal, Bhagwan published the news of a Brahmo girl having passed Matriculation examination in the first division. This young girl was awarded a purse of Rs. fifty and a scholarship by the Director of the Public Instruction, Bengal. When Bhagwan came to know of it he wrote :—

“Indeed this act of the Government in encouraging female education and creating in people fondness for it deserves our country's deepest gratitude. *Our girls are in no way inferior to boys in mental ability.* If in spite of such instances, our educated countrymen do not feel the weight of heavy responsibility which lies on their shoulders so far as education of women is concerned and do not pay sufficient attention to it, it is indeed extremely deplorable and painful sight for well-wishers of our land.”

TAKING THREE LADIES IN A PUBLIC MEETING.

It has become almost a rule now for ladies to attend meetings specially political meetings. But there was a time when no lady ventured to attend a public meeting. In the Punjab, Bhagwan brought about this happy innovation. We have said before that in the month of January 1879, Bhagwan delivered a lecture in "Shiksha Sabha" Hall on the present-day condition of women. Next month Bhagwan delivered two other lectures on the education of women. The substance of these two lectures was published by the editor, *Akhbar Anjuman* in his own journal. The item of news which deserves special mention is that in the second lecture three Brahmo ladies attended. Bhagwan also wrote :—

"It gives us perfect joy to state that besides male audience three Brahmo ladies also attended the second lecture."

What a tremendous reforming zeal must Bhagwan have felt for the cause of women's uplift, even in those days, as to feel so enthused about every step that women took towards progress. Such a novel step by the ladies must have come as a blight to the orthodox and an alarming piece of news to the weak and the faltering among educated, and an act of unusual daring on the part of Bhagwan to the half-hearted champions; but to none it must have given that perfect joy which can come only to the heart tuned wholly and completely to the cause of reform as Bhagwan's was.

ALL OUR SPIRITUAL, MORAL AND GENERAL PROGRESS RESTS ON THE PROGRESS MADE BY OUR WOMENFOLK.

Bhagwan wrote in his journal for June 1879 :—

"The entire progress of India in spiritual, moral and other lines rests solely on the progress made by our womenfolk. Those therefore who possess true feeling for the cause of the progress of women deserve our genuine respect no matter to what society they belong."

THE PROGRESS OF AMERICA IS DUE TO THE PROGRESS MADE BY ITS WOMEN.

In the month of June 1879, Bhagwan wrote :—

"In New York, there is an association of women called Psychomatric Society. All the departments of the Church which they have established, have reference only to the problem of their sex. One of the greatest causes of the progress of America is the comparatively greater regard they show to women's rights than in any other country. Special attention is paid there to the education and privileges of women."

PUBLICLY SUPPORTING THE CAUSE OF WIDOW REMARRIAGE.

It will not be out of place to make a brief mention of Bhagwan's advocacy of widow remarriage in early seventies. We have dealt with this problem in some detail before now. But the picture of Bhagwan's wonderful love for women's cause would not be complete

without touching very briefly on his attitude towards widows. In the October 1879 issue of his journal, Bhagwan wrote :—

“ In the August issue of a paper a gentleman wrote a strong and vigorous article on the condition of widows. The writer says that the earth of our land is being scorched by the fire of tyranny and oppression practised on child widows. It is their wails and lamentations, he says, which have darkened the horizon of India and it is their curses which have brought about the present degraded condition of our land. We feel confident that so long as the sufferings of these innocent girls and the cause of the uplift of general woman does not touch the heart of our people and make them restless, it is utterly improbable that our land can make satisfactory progress and rise in the scale of nations.”

Along with this, Bhagwan published in his own journal the news of two widow remarriages at Lahore. Even to talk of widow remarriage in those days was an anathema. To boldly stand for it and to publish its news in the columns of his journal with a note of strong approval was almost certain to be severely opposed by the Hindus. Bhagwan wrote :—

“ In the month of August two widows were remarried. Babu Nitobar Mullick, aged thirty-three, was married to a widow, Shrimati Prabodh Malini, aged twenty according to Brahmo Samaj rites. It is a matter of genuine gratification that this widow remarriage was not celebrated in the same caste but it was also an inter-caste marriage. Several Brahmo gentlemen and ladies were present on the occasion.

“ The second marriage took place among high caste Brahmans. The bridegroom was Babu Haridas Bannerji aged twenty-five. The bride was Shrimati Mukti Keshy Mukerji aged twenty-three. These are called true examples of true and good manhood.”

APPRECIATION FOR AN ASSOCIATION IN ENGLAND FOUNDED TO FACILITATE MARRIAGE OF THE DESTITUTE GIRLS.

In the same issue Bhagwan said :—

“ In London an association has been formed with the sole object of arranging the marriage of the poor and destitute girls who, because of financial stringency, are not able to enter wedlock. The association has collected 30 lacs for the above object. For the present they have decided to help 100 girls every year to marry. Every girl will be given as a dowery a gift of Rs. 1,500.”

How every aspect of the cause of women's progress appealed forcibly to the heart of Bhagwan! Is it any wonder then why women in Dev Samaj enjoy such a prominent position and daughters are treated with greater tenderness than even sons?

PHYSICAL AND MORAL UPLIFT OF CHILDREN.

The “ child ” attracted as much attention of Bhagwan as the cause of women. Being a complete lover of goodness, he could not

bear the general indifference that prevailed in the minds of parents towards the physical and moral well-being of their own children. Bhagwan took up with his masterful enthusiasm the cause of the child welfare. Once Bhagwan was pleased to remark "Every department of human life lies so woefully neglected and it demands so much the whole-hearted attention and service of men and women that if they possessed only one or other higher feeling which could show them the wants, woes and miseries of others, the work of child welfare alone would absorb the lives of many." This remark was made on an occasion when Bhagwan saw the eldest son of one of his workers, then a child of four years, in a physically weak state. His most merciful heart went over to the child and he spoke for about half an hour giving that worker any amount of suggestions. In the end, Bhagwan graciously said, "The cause of child-welfare appeals to me so forcefully that if I had not been wedded to my supreme life vow of truth and goodness which completely possesses me, I would have felt it a privilege to dedicate my whole life to the service of the cause of the child." It is the cause of child-welfare that led Bhagwan to open several institutions for them.

This wonderful feeling we find in him even in seventies of nine-teenth century when he wrote long—very long—articles dealing with the problem of child-welfare. We quote here some, to give an idea to our readers how he felt for the child. In the columns of his journal for January 1878, Bhagwan wrote :—

"There is universal consensus of opinion that it is not only proper and necessary for man to develop all such qualities where-with God—the gracious—has equipped him at birth, but it is a solemn and serious duty on him to attend to it in order to deserve the name of man and to preserve the dignity of humanity. But it is also clear on its very face that if the training of man during his childhood is neglected and no attention is paid to his sound and refined culture, it is a sheer folly to expect of him to grow into a morally civilised human soul during his adolescence or old age. During infancy man is like a tender plant. You all know how a gardener in his garden tends a small plant and what measures and means he adopts to see that it grows straight and develops regularly, so that it may be able to yield in time good crop of fruit or flowers. He prunes it, cuts off its dried twigs, manures it in time, waters it in time and if need be he gives it a support of some kind to help it on to grow straight and thus he has to think of all things relative to its growth. All this labour he takes and all possible scheme he thinks about it merely because he is anxious that his plant should live at least the natural span of life and yield the best and the sweetest fruit and not the sour ones. How tragic indeed is the sight of a man who devotes so much attention and thought to the well-being of the plants in his garden but is seen so callously indifferent to his own beloved child. Does he in fact spend his time and attention in the cause of the welfare of his own child, sufficiently

and so well and does he labour to find out and adopt all such measures for his good as may save him from wrecking his most precious life, and thus acquit himself from that sin which naturally attaches to those who neglect their sacred duties ?

“ Owing to absence of education in our land for some centuries past, *people have ceased to attend to problem of man's dealings or general behaviour in his private life. Our private life is one great question which ought to engage our best thought.* Only men of narrow outlook or low understanding can consider this question as insignificant and not worthy of our consideration. But to the wise and the civilised this question is the most delicate and the most important of all. Family forms a small world in itself. Those who neglect this world and fail to get true light regarding the laws that govern these relations to make it higher and nobler, can be of little service in the outside world. If we choose to remain absolutely ignorant of the knowledge of our duties and responsibilities and the laws of behaviour or conduct towards those with whom we have to live on closest possible terms for the major portion of our life, we should not expect to live an easy and comfortable life and we should not grumble if troubles and miseries become our lot and we see ourselves deprived of the blessings of a civilised and well regulated home. The just but painful consequences of this plan of life would not be limited merely to us as individuals, but we would go beyond and prove harmful to society of which we are a necessary and inseparable part.

“ When we cast a reflective glance over the present-day condition of our land and compare it with other civilised races or nations, we feel that we need absolute overhauling of our home and social life. There was a time when this land had attained great heights of civilised life. But the wheel of time has cast us down, and now we lie submerged in the debris of our wrecked civilisation which fills us with deep pain. There are some beautiful things still in our race which need tender and jealous protection and preservation. But the general outlook is such that it demands great metamorphosis. This most momentous change is not possible so long we do not start from the beginning, *i.e.*, do not take up the cause of the child-welfare. It is true that we are anxious to see our children rise higher than ourselves. But this anxiety on our part would avail us nothing, so long as we do not introduce all such higher methods of training and upbringing of our children which are civilised. Our present attention is confined only to feeding of our children and ministering to their animal needs. Animals do likewise. We cannot show better behaviour towards our children if, on the one hand, we do not get true light about our own duties and responsibilities towards them and on the other, apprise ourselves of those true principles of human civilisation which apply exclusively to man and are most essential for its welfare. So long as we remain in darkness about them, we shall not be considered to have understood our obligation as men.”

"When we look at man, we see three things in him. He has a body. He has an intellect. He has a heart. The human child is possessed of an organism consisting of these three departments of his life. Any education or training which neglects any part of the human child's life is absolutely incomplete. From the time that the Government has opened various educational institutions, parents have been sending their children in thousands to avail themselves of the benefits of education. But it is extremely regretted that so far body and heart culture of children is concerned, there is hardly any attention worth the name paid to them. What surprises us most is that even the educated classes show abject indifference to these two great needs of their own children. It seems those evils in child life are a sealed book to them, which are proving a fatal set-back in the way of progress of their promising life. They do not perhaps see or do not care to see that portion of their nation's life which relates to their body and morals and which has not only deformed their persons and their soul-life but has produced and is producing terrible effects on the life of the nation itself. Leaving aside the most fearful havoc which child marriage has played on our progeny and is still crushing it, our present woeful indifference to the physical welfare of our children is responsible for the growing bodily debility and physical breakdown of our generation. Is it right to sit with folded hands when our own darlings are silently but steadily getting weaker day by day? How long shall we lie contented in the lap of this awful sleep? Would we let our race go to ruin? No, thousands time no. Not only shall we put forth herculean efforts to root out the most pernicious custom of child-marriage but we shall study and apply all such principles to the physical growth and well-being of our children as are being applied in the civilised races, and thus feed and strengthen the physical constitution of our generations.

"The moral condition of our people is such as needs no description at our hands. No honest and civilised man can go once to our bazaars to deal with shopkeepers not return dissatisfied. In our own school a boy of high class very triumphantly said, "My father one day took two tickets from the booking office of the value of six annas each. He gave a rupee to the booking clerk. The clerk should have returned annas four to my father, but by mistake he gave him annas twelve. My father was very much delighted to find that instead of four annas he had got twelve annas." We have to teach Drawing to high class students. We ask them to draw lines without the help of the rule. But when they bring to us the work, they were asked to do, we find that they have, as against specific orders to the contrary, drawn lines with the help of a rule. We confront them with this and without the least hesitation they blurt out "Sir, we have drawn lines with our hand." We know that they are telling lies. And when we press them hard they half-heartedly acknowledge their guilt. Now when this is the moral condition of the life of those, who are to pass for the educated people, in matters of such most insignificant character as

drawing, one can imagine to what depths they would descend when they see before them the tempting chances of greasing their itching palm? Of what asset can these dishonest men be to any government or nation? What we have described about the honesty of boys is not an exception to the rule. Our land is full of men made of such poor stuff. It may be that this state of things may be unknown to those who live in privacy. But those who move about and come in contact in various dealings with our people know it as a matter of course that not to speak of those who claim no conformity to higher principles even ordinary decent people seem strangers to the very conception of what constitutes morality. Let those who choose to blame us for making this frank statement please themselves. But we cannot shut our eyes to what we see as an evil, and we cannot sit with folded hands when it rules our land. It is no doubt true that no race of humanity consists of all perfect people. All nations possess black sheep. But every race gets a name and distinction according to the quality which prevails in the general run of that race. When we say that climate of a particular place is good, it does not mean that no man falls ill there and that all the people there are perfectly healthy. What we mean by that is, the general health of the people there is good. In our land there are very few people who follow moral principles strictly in their everyday life. The number of those who are devotees of falsehood, hypocrisy, fraud, cruelty, dishonesty, etc., is legion. In the circle of the educated men, we find very few who adhere scrupulously to moral principles. But in majority of them we come across those delinquencies which are unknown to their uneducated brethren.

“What is the root cause of this great evil? We attribute it to the woeful indifference of moral training of the child. It therefore behoves at least the educated class that along with mental education which they consider necessary for children, they should cultivate in them love for moral principles in daily life.

“When our land begins to give the blessings of moral culture to the children side by side with mental education, we are sure to see the dawn of a day when it would rise to those heights of civilisation which our land is said to have attained in the hoary past and it will then secure a sure place in the galaxy of the other civilised nations.”

How deeply Bhagwan valued the life of higher character! It is not surprising then that he started educational institutions with the supreme object of the moral uplift of the children. The Dev Samaj institutions have rightly won the well-merited name of moral life developing institutions.

NECESSARY RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE UPBRINGING OF THE CHILDREN.

Bhagwan continued this theme in a series of articles. He did not confine himself merely to directing the attention of the parents

to one thing essential, *i.e.*, evolution of noble character among the children. He also drew their serious thought to problems of food, general cleanliness, dress, etc. Even at this time the reading of those articles are stimulating and very instructive. Bhagwan wrote in the issue of his journal for March 1879 :—

“ We shall at the outset make a special mention of those things which concern directly with the question of the bringing up of children and which need special consideration at the hands of the general public.

“ *Food.*—Every animal is born with absolute dependence on food for his sustenance. Among men both the savage and the civilised have to subsist on food. As the savage and the civilised races differ widely from one another in various ways and modes of life, in the same way a wide gulf separates them in matters of the methods of food. The savage feels hungry and rushes to any kind of food and rests content when his hunger is appeased. It never occurs to him to enquire into the quality or ingredients of the food essential for his bodily make up. He is therefore completely ignorant of the fact as to the extent that a particular kind of food supplied nutrition to his body. It is not our object here to deal with the scientific analysis of various articles of food. We only feel impelled to direct the attention of our countrymen to the general principle, that while giving various kinds of things to their children as food, they should at least be careful that they specifically keep their children out of the reach of those articles which are difficult of digestion and which harm the digestive functions. As for example, sweetmeats prepared by the confectioners is very common with our people. In towns it is a general custom of the parents to give to their children some money daily to buy sweetmeats. The use of sweetmeats is very pernicious for children. The use of *puri*, *kachouri* or *mathi* (sold on such shops) also is very harmful for children.”

And yet is it not a fact that even to-day these are the very things that parents feed their children upon? In various schools and colleges the articles of food which are most popular among children and students are various kinds of sweetmeats, *puri*, *kachouri*, *mathi*, etc. sold by the confectioners or hawkers.

Bhagwan continued :—

“ As during the first months of infancy of child, mother's milk is ordinarily the best food for it, in the same way after it is weaned and is able gradually to take food, there can be no better substitute for it than milk, rice and wheat bread (with the addition of ample fruit). As they are easy to digest so they are very beneficial to health and general well-being. As it is extremely necessary that a child during its early months should be fed on mother's milk, so it is necessary that after some time it should necessarily be weaned. In the opinion of physicians, the child should have nothing but mother's milk for as many months as he is ordinarily in mother's

womb. After it is weaned from mother's milk it may be given cow's milk or if parents can afford they can engage a woman possessed of breast milk to suckle the child."

Cleanliness of body.—After food what contributes most to the health of a child is cleanliness. So far as food is concerned the conditions in our land are not exposed to as much reproach as our attitude towards bodily cleanliness. We feel our daily life, as regards cleanliness of body, of house and of all things therein, is concerned, most objectionable. We do not find a great landlord or a wealthy man observing that cleanliness of body and surroundings which we see in an ordinary European home. It is not enough for cleanliness that we take bath. Cleanliness means keeping the house clean, things tidied, clothes well washed and neat, and all the house materials free from dirt and well arranged. So far as it is possible we must propagate among our ladies the ideas of general cleanliness and love of order of things, since they are the chief custodians of man's life in childhood. And if they have no sense of cleanliness of person or things, dress or houses it is idle to expect a growing child develop any sense of cleanliness and tidiness. When we see an ordinary child in ordinary home, we find him so dirty, and so filthy that it offends deeply one's sense of cleanliness. If one were to observe with any penetration, he would find that cleanliness of soul urgently requires cleanliness of body. God the gracious, has confined children to our trust so that by their innocence we may profit spiritually. Is it not our duty then that we should keep them clean and tidy and not spoil even their physical appearance by keeping them dirty and thus injure their health?"

Dress.—Bhagwan dealt with this subject too at some length. He was pleased to analyse first the grounds which have impelled men to seek dress. They are three (1) To cover shame, (2) To protect body, (3) To beautify person. "Those savages who have not had the chance to awaken to the necessity or use of dress are found, all the same, covering some parts of their person with leaves, etc. Our people would at once say, that they keep all these objects or reasons in view when they dress. But a slight reflection would convince us that parents as a rule show lamentable lack of attention to the second point. They do not keep in view the protection of body by dress. Again several superstitions control the choice of dress, Then the dress is not kept clean. Ornaments are frequently used. There are thousands of families in India who labour under a superstition that it is harmful for their children to wear their own and home-made cloth and they beg of old dresses from other friendly houses. Again superstition controls the washing of clothes. For months together the dress is not changed. Every effort is made to dress the child in fancy clothes of costly nature and thus considerations of simplicity and health are ruthlessly dismissed for the sake of outward display. The use of ornaments on child's person is really a most obnoxious custom. It is true that we find some improvement in this custom, but it would take our people

still a very long time to awaken to the object of dress."

Exercise.—Bhagwan also emphasised at length the need of exercise for all classes and ages of men as the one means of making body strong and less exposed to disease. During the childhood men are by nature active, energetic and fond of games. But as they reach adult life, hardly one per cent retains that state or takes exercise to maintain it. They begin to cherish a fallacious idea that exercise is intended only for those who want to be trained as wrestlers and athletes. In our land, the wealthy classes want a conveyance even for a short distance. To expect them to take exercise is to build castles in the air. They therefore turn deformed and unusually unwieldy in person. The higher civilisation wherever prevailing, has laid down on all as a necessary obligation to take exercise in all the stages of life from childhood to old age. Our people also need to be awakened to the importance of the use of open air for themselves and their children. Living in congested streets and playing there cannot bless them with benefits of pure air which is found outside the boundaries of town in open fields and gardens. We need to cultivate a habit in all our children to breathe daily in open air, by open air games or open air walks.

Bhagwan could not bear evil in any phase of man's life and hence by both pen and tongue he requisitioned his phenomenal powers to the service of his people and in that unique service, he found the greatest and highest satisfaction of his soul powers.

STRUGGLE TO AWAKEN VARIOUS HIGHER FEELINGS AMONG OTHERS.

The beauty and necessity of Upkar Bhav (feeling of service of others).

In the columns of *Bradar-i-Hind*, for September 1877, at the page 210, Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote a very inspiring article on "Who is a true miser." He wrote:—

"Though the public is not far wrong when it condemns the man as a miser who accumulates wealth to a considerable extent but neither spends it for his own benefit, nor lets others use it for their good, yet a slight reflection would show that the word miser cannot be used exclusively for such a man. This kind of miser can deprive himself and others of the use of his vast treasures at the most up to the period of his sojourn on this earth. After his demise somebody shall have to inherit his great riches. How such a heir would use the inheritance rests on his personal character. If he is good-natured and a sensible man, he is bound to utilise the treasures for his own good and the betterment of others. If he is incapable, vicious and sensual, he is bound to waste it away in evil ways. But all that hardly has anything to do with the miser. He on his part parts with his money when he leaves this earth. It afterwards lies with others who get those riches how they use them. Such a miser can be dubbed a miser only up to his earthly career.

But he is miser *par excellence* who has accumulated the treasures of mind, the wealth of wisdom, some special art, some new experiences and yet who without communicating them to others, crosses the bourn and joins his forefathers. Do we not see hundreds of such people who have become learned and distinguished scholars, who have acquired new experiences and have specialised in some art or handicraft, and yet who pass away from this earth taking away all knowledge in their mind without having either imparted their mental wealth to others or preserved it in books and manuscripts for the good of the world? They die the death of perfect misers.

"Is it not our bounden duty to leave behind all our knowledge and experiences in books or other records and thus let others derive benefit from us, much in the same way as we ourselves profit by pursuing literature and philosophies left as heritage by others for our good? It is others who planted trees and we reaped the harvest. It now behoves us to plant in our turn new trees in the garden of the world for the generations to come to reap the fruits. *In this lies true humanity.* Give and take is the law of our mutual dealings in man world. *He who simply receives but does not give, is in reality a miser.*"

"It is evident therefore that a true miser is he who departs from this earth taking all his wealth of knowledge, experience and learning with himself, and such a man is decidedly worse than a miser who accumulates things of this earth which he has perforce to leave behind and in the disposal of which he has no part or share or voice after his death. Sheikh Sa'adi has rightly said, "Do good oh man! consider life a great opportunity and do good before a cry is raised that that fellow is dead."

"Bear in mind therefore that goodness is something which is eternal, which demands of man not to be a miser in the distribution of wealth of his knowledge, experience, learning, new thoughts, etc."

This is how Bhagwan tried to win souls to better and nobler life of service to others. Any man who had a spark of feeling of sympathy felt through his writings a great impetus to do something for the good of his fellow human beings.

A GLIMPSE OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA'S OWN GREAT LONGING TO SERVE.

At some places in the same journal, we catch the glimpses of the glorious psychic forces of Bhagwan's own soul which not only cannot fail to elevate us, but afford us a key to Bhagwan's great and untiring activities for the highest good of others.

A correspondent had put some questions to Bhagwan as an editor and had requested him to give the reply thereto in the columns of his paper. The letter containing questions reached Bhagwan after the August issue was out. Hence the letter could be

replied to only in the month of September. Bhagwan's apology for late publication is very significant. He writes :—

“ A gentleman from Multan sent a letter to us. He made some enquiries from us pertaining to religious matters. We very gladly publish the letter and our reply thereto. We got the letter last month. But it is regretted that it reached us after the issue was out. Hence we could not publish it earlier. Let us assure our readers that it affords us extreme satisfaction to reply to questions of an enquirer whose one motive is to solve a difficulty for himself and who comes with an attitude of a seeker after truth. It is a great thing to seek. A seeker after truth has a position in the economy of Nature which is indeed the highest.” According to a distinguished Logician and Philosopher :—

“ No belief is worth acceptance in the eyes of the great and the select persons (and not of the wicked) which is antagonistic to facts and truth.”

This brief quotation is significant of the fact that Bhagwan not only loved the spirit of enquiry even in others but felt an extreme joy to help such a seeker. The world has hardly countenanced such seekers of truth and hence it has converged all its forces against one who has dared to think in opposition to received and established conventions or channels of thought and practice. Bhagwan Dev Atma who was enraptured by the matchless beauty of truth and goodness warmly hailed a man who tried to seek truth and did all his best for him without caring for being agreeable or being agreed with or being popular, but he was anxious to be useful in the path of truth and goodness.

This spirit of serving others without being influenced by praise or blame is evident in Bhagwan Dev Atma's writings of those early seventies. When *Bradar-i-Hind* completed its third year and stepped into the fourth, Bhagwan wrote a long introductory note in the course of which he wrote :—

“ *Bradar-i-Hind* has been busy for the last three years in the task of cultivating the spirit of reform in this country. It is now beginning its fourth year. During this period it had had an occasion to fall into the hands of and to serve hundreds of Indian brethren. To some it went by itself and majority of them invited it to their homes. Some warmly hailed it and gave it a hearty embrace. Some treated it with scant courtesy. But whether praised or blamed it has served all alike without any prejudice. The zeal and deep interest with which it entered into its career of service has not at all during this period waned. Nay, it has waxed warmer and its spirit of service grown fuller and deeper with the time.”

This is in fact the test of the existence of any true highest soul force. Any altruistic force or higher love is a motive power which cannot fail to move the entire being of man, come what may. It carries the possessor through any amount of adverse combination of obstacles and makes him impervious to any considerations of

praise or blame. That being his dominating force, his life would be impossible without bending all his thoughts and energies to its service. Most of the problems of mankind would stand solved, only if man were so changed that, on the one hand, he would be incapable of consciously doing undue injury to any living or non-living being and, on the other, it would be impossible for him to live without dedicating all his powers and possessions for the good of others.

THE BEAUTY AND NECESSITY OF SYMPATHY.

In the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for August 1877 at page 248-250, Bhagwan Dev Atma while lamenting the want of response in Hindu and Musalman public towards an appeal made for the famine-stricken people of Southern India wrote :—

“He whose heart is not gentle, who possesses no fear of God and no true feeling of sympathy for the suffering, can never be credited with possessing any heart at all. We have to see how many people in our land have actually a heart; how many possess the milk of human sympathy and how many possess fear of God. To go into temples and give princely donations there (in the form of offering), to go on pilgrimages and feed, on a vast scale, as many Brahmans as one can, would never show that you possess human sympathy or true fear of God. All that it would show is, that you are utterly selfish having nothing but a business spirit. You are prepared to unstring your purses liberally in favour of only those who would promise you fairies in *Baikunth* (paradise). All this is about Hindus. But what about Mohamedans? In the words of Sir Sayyed Ahmad, the Muslims are not free from blame. They would gladly send lacs and if possible crores to Turkey (where Khalifa once ruled). But so long as the Muslims expect a place in heavens and lot of *Hurs* to wed with as a return for these liberal gifts to Turkey they cannot escape being dubbed as utterly selfish. If they had any feeling of sympathy their charity would necessarily have started at home. Do not Musalmans live in Bombay and Madras? Do they not suffer the pangs of starvation due to ravages of famine? But it is regretted that to our knowledge not a single Mohamedan has come forward with any donation for these famine-stricken people. If the wounded people of Turkey are to receive help from India, do not Indians who are being oppressed by the monster of famine deserve at least as much consideration? If Turks are to be helped with millions, should not Indians be succoured with a few thousands? The hope of paradise led even an impoverished Muslim woman here to part with her beloved ornaments. The hope of *Baikunth* led a Hindu lady to throw into Ganges ornaments worth thousands. But alas! how many have come forward to feed our famished brethren in India in the famine-stricken area with so much as a morsel? Oh! mercy!! where hast thou gone? Oh! sympathy where art thou? Our hearts break at the sight of our dear suffering land. Our mother land is being ground down by the present calamity. But the stony-hearted

children of India remain quite unaffected by the pitiable plight of their own stricken mother. They are dead to its lamentations. They do not melt at the sight of small children being cast into waters and thus dying an unnatural death. Oh! my countrymen, if you have any spirit of humanity left in you, awaken!! Open your eyes and see how your own countrymen are faring in the grip of famine. The whole area between Krishna and Cape Kumari consisting of 600 miles and containing vast population, is caught up in the claws of famine and is suffering acutely. In spite of some government help, five lacs have already fallen a victim to this dire calamity. Thousands of villages are laid waste. Hundreds of mothers are consigning their little ones to the tender mercies of water and following them immediately to have a watery grave. The roads are strewn with dead bodies. Oh! what a fate of this greatest among created beings! There is no one to bury or burn them and thus do the last services to them. If our countrymen show no sympathy the whole area would gradually be washed away and all the men would be dead and gone. Englishmen, whom you call *malech*, are doing godly work. From London itself, about three lacs and thirty thousands have been subscribed and sent in aid of the famine stricken. Do we not deserve to die of shame, if even to-day we sit with folded hands and see the *tamasha* unaffected? This is not an occasion to appeal to Rajas, Maharajas and landed proprietors. This is a time when everyone of our 24 crores of people should come forward and contribute from one pice to one lac and thus relieve the suffering of our own countrymen."

This needs no comment. The very spirit which these lines breath is bound to animate readers at all times.

AN APPEAL FOR FAMINE-STRICKEN TURKS.

Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed true feeling of true sympathy which produced an ache in his heart whenever there was misery. This sympathy was not sectional as no sympathy, if it is a true feeling, can be such. Hence when he read about the famished and miserable state of the people of Turkey, he could not help rising up to the occasion and extending friendly hand to them and rousing others to do the same. He wrote in the paragraphs in the March issue of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1878 :—

"The Turk refugees are in a lamentable state. From fifty to seventy thousand refugees—men, women and children—have rushed to Constantinople. These persons have been oppressed by hunger, thirst and the calamities of war, and hence driven by sheer misery to seek asylum in Constantinople. The accounts that we read of the terrible straits to which they have been reduced and extreme sufferings which they have faced are heart breaking. This is the time when men all over the world irrespective of caste, colour, creed or country should come forward to succour them by sending financial help. The Musalmans helped the Turks with millions when Turkey was engaged in war. But we have to see how far the

Musalmans help their co-religionists now that war with foreigners has ended. This is the time for expression of true sympathy and a spirit of true humanity."

This appeal was made by Bhagwan as early as in the year 1878. He felt deep pain that man should give even millions when he sees he can have heavens in exchange or the joys of having fairies as a compensation, but become absolutely close fisted when he has no hope of exchange but that he has merely to respond to human misery. Sympathy for the sake of sympathy was and is almost a rare commodity. It is this pure sympathy which Bhagwan wished to see in mankind even then and in his later life. He made it a mission of his life to cultivate such noble feelings in the hearts of men along with weaning them from evils and sins and imparting to them the most precious light regarding their own inner being or soul or life-power.

VOICE AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF EXCHANGE IN MATTERS RELIGIOUS.

It was in the year 1877 in the month of September that Bhagwan wrote in strong terms against those Hindus and Musalmans who proved absolutely callous and irresponsible to the appeals made all over India for the famine-stricken Madras. Commenting on the attitude of Musalmans, he wrote :—

"Somebody might say why it is that Musalmans as a body do not respond to the appeal for help? Do not Musalmans live in Madras? Are they not among the famine stricken? We say yes, Musalmans do inhabit Madras. We say Musalmans are also suffering the pangs of starvation. It is piety no doubt for a Muslim to help a Muslim brother in trouble. But he is wise. He knows that any monetary or other help to the Khalifa and Turks in war would get him greater piety and procure for him richer rewards in heavens. He would become *Ghazi* by such an act, when alive, and martyr when dead. He argues why he should sacrifice the great piety for an insignificant good that he does by helping famine-stricken people. We have not read or heard that Musalmans have contributed even a single pice towards famine relief fund. It is a pity that true sympathy.....is almost absent in our people."

AN APPEAL FOR AN ARYA ORPHANAGE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma had no sympathy for the creed of the Arya Samaj and the policy of its Founder. Throughout his life, he protested vehemently against the wrong teachings and objectionable policy of Swami Dayanand. But Bhagwan could never withhold his appreciation and help for any good act done by any society and hence whole-heartedly supported it. In the columns of *Bradar-i-Hind* for October 1878 Bhagwan published a long notice in the form of appeal for the opening of an Arya orphanage at Ferozepore with his introductory remarks which we briefly quote here :—

"In the columns of the *Arya Darpan* for the month of September, we read a notice that Lala Mathura Das, President Arya Samaj

Ferozepore, has issued in the form of an appeal with the object of founding an orphanage there. This orphanage would bring up and educate such of the children who have no parents or guardians to take care of them, who are needy, helpless and vagrants and who instead of being brought up by their own community or race, are being brought up and educated by alien communities or races. We are glad to see that our people have begun to awaken and feel the healthy throbs of patriotism. Before this, one orphanage has already been opened by the generosity and courage of Babu Navin Chandra Roy and it has completed one year of its existence. Its annual report is about to be published. We therefore very warmly publish an appeal by Lala Mathra Das and we hope that our readers would support it as an institution for the public good. We hope that this institution might serve as an inspiration to other people to open similar institutions in their own localities, so that provisions may be made for housing, feeding and educating those utterly helpless, parentless, needy and miserable orphans, the very sight of whose plight melts any human soul into tears."

BEAUTY AND NECESSITY OF FEELING OF REVERENCE.

Reverence is a higher force which enables its possessor to see the beauty and glory of higher life and noble feelings in others and bend in homage to them and get an urge to possess such noble feeling at any sacrifice of lower powers or material possessions. This is one of the priceless possessions for every progressive human soul. Bhagwan Dev Atma evolved this beautiful force in himself to an extraordinary degree; and we find its expression in Bhagwan's writings and activities even in the seventies. In the July issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* of 1875, Bhagwan wrote the following in the course of a long article on the races of India:—

"Out of four divisions of Hindus, the Brahmans enjoyed such a deep adoration, respect and reverence (which has continued up to to-day) because they were experts and well versed in the knowledge of all *Shastras* (which contained all about the customs, manners, conduct and religious practices, etc., of Hindus). Many of these Brahmans of old unlike their present-day generations lived their lives according to Shastric injunctions and considered it essential to fulfil all their duties. They were humble and simple. They taught religion to others with a sweet and eloquent tongue. They were embodiment of charity and unselfish service. They were deadly opposed to low feelings of selfishness and show. They were inveterate enemies of *Hinsa* (or undue injury inflicted on others). They were self-controlled and full of forbearance."

"How glorious! If such men were deeply honoured and respected, it was but natural. Who else could have been worthy of veneration and reverence if not they? Blessed were those Brahmans who possessed such beautiful traits of noble life."

This shows that of all other things the one thing that appealed

most to Bhagwan's heart even in those days, was higher, noble and singularly serviceable life. It was something tangible, practicable, definable and extremely useful life for mankind. We find this admiration for noble life in its beautiful and impressive form in a long article which Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote on the passing away of a great and patriotic soul Pandit Bishnu Shastri in November issue of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1876.

On the death of Pandit Bishnu Shastri, Editor of *Indu Prakash*, a leading paper of Bombay, Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote the above long article eulogizing his services in the cause of widow remarriage, at the very outset of which he said :—

“The very memory of this great man's name melts one's heart. The perusal of his life-story brings tears to one's eyes. We wish there were half a dozen more men like him who should have spent their lives in the welfare of this land with similar firm resolution and unshakable steadfastness. What a personality he was who did not budge an inch from his chosen path of service of mankind and who boldly faced untold sufferings and calamities in order to save thousands from their misery.

“Indeed it is personalities like his who are said to have lived. Die we all must. Men die. Animals die. Birds and crawling creatures die. But all do not die the same kind of death. Moths, worms and others die and disappear altogether from the face of this earth as if they had never existed at all. But those who die as our dear revered Panditji died, do not at all die in the ordinary sense. They live over again in the treasured memory of others. We wish such a fate—such a glorious death—to fall to the lot of every fortunate person. For such death leaves an eternal memory of the glorious dead in the records and memories of humanity.

“Pandit Bishnu Shastri who passed away only a few days ago, was not only a great religious reformer, but he was a stalwart champion in the crusade against that most pernicious social evil custom of enforced widowhood which is but too well-known in this land, and he was one of those patriots who struck an axe at its roots.”

To see the beauty of any higher trait of life in any soul, in such a form, as to feel moved to tears and sing its glory in most spontaneous and flowing terms, shows the existence of the noble feeling of reverence. Reverence is a rare trait in mankind. To admire achievements of the worldly nature is given to many. But to see the beauty of the feelings behind any good achievements and specially those of soul is given to a very few. If many of us had possessed that kind of reverence we could not have remained contented with the absence of noble traits in us. The eye of reverence which is to open the garden of higher world of feelings, has yet to be evolved and when this is done Nature will have taken another long leap in its march of evolution and the whole

outlook of man's life would change. He would not feel proud of worldly achievements or even triumphs of intellect. He would feel, on the contrary, very poor if he has won those glories but is shorn of higher feelings. He would measure his worth by the absence in him of the slavery to any low-love or low-hate and presence in him of any higher feeling.

The foundation of this new world has been laid by Bhagwan in his unique society of the Dev Samaj, in the constitution whereof it is higher, nobler and altruistic nature which forms the basis of the entire gradations. Man is primarily valued in Dev Samaj for growth in noble life and his wealth and intellectual growth are relegated a secondary place.

Bhagwan Dev Atma alone was fitted to give a new start to humanity towards a newer and higher stage of evolution.

REVERENCE FOR SECRET CHARITY.

It was in the January issue of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1878 that Bhagwan Dev Atma published a short editorial note which is very significant of Bhagwan's inner nature even at that period of his life. He wrote:—

"The true and the highest principle of charity consists in giving with the right hand in a way that even the left hand should not be aware of it. It was our impression that examples of persons following this great principle are rare. . . . Even in our own land we come across such inspiring cases. Only a few days ago, a gentleman sent in an envelope notes of Rs. 1,200 to the address of the Dacca Deputy Commissioner for the relief of the famine-stricken people. When the envelope was opened there was no name, address or even indication of the sender. This is true charity."

Bhagwan Dev Atma throughout the career of his unique life discouraged vehemently every form of the spirit of bargain in charity. We know personally that when one of his *sevaks* put into a deed of gift to Dev Samaj, a specific condition that his name would be given to the institution, he felt pained and was pleased to remark "you insist on having a name—a behaviour which is not desirable. I am feeling ashamed of this spirit of bargain in one who is my *Sevak*."

EXPRESSION OF REVERENCE FOR A GENEROUS HEARTED LADY.

We read in the same issue:—

"Maharani Shivan is unequalled in Bengal for her generosity. There is no work of India's progress or national welfare which she is not ever ready to help. She donated rupees ten thousand towards the relief fund for the welfare of the famine-stricken people in Madras. Again we hear that she has contributed two thousand towards the expenses that are to be incurred in preparing and submitting

an all India memorial on the subject of I. C. S. before the British Parliament through Babu Surrendra Nath Bannerji."

Bhagwan never let any noble act pass unnoticed and without an expression of admiration on his part.

ADMIRATION FOR MISS COLLET.

The name of Miss Collet is very intimately associated with the Brahmo movement. She has won a corner in the heart of India by her open advocacy of an Indian movement. There are people in India who treasure her name. Bhagwan Dev Atma also wrote in very appreciative terms in the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for April 1879 about her good and noble work while reviewing her Brahmo Year book. He wrote:—

"We have on our table Brahmo Year book by Miss Collet. We are confident most of our readers must have heard of the name of Miss Collet. But we feel that it is necessary that Brahmos and other well-wishers of our land should know something about her life and activities. This lady has not visited India; she has not therefore seen this land except on a map. But those well aware of her enormous efforts and great activities done in the cause of the moral and religious amelioration of our land, can form some estimate of her life and character. England is wonderful. If it possesses men who are perfect embodiments of Devil, it also possesses men who are nothing but angels personified. When Miss Collet came to hear about Brahmo Samaj, her interest in the movement was awakened to such an extent that she read all literature relating to Brahmo Samaj which she could lay her hands upon. She acquired such a deep and thorough understanding of the principles and history of the Brahmo Samaj, as is possessed by few even in the Brahmo Samaj itself. She was not content to keep to herself all the knowledge and light she got about Brahmo Samaj. But her awakened humane feelings and her spirit of devotion led her to propagate, what she had got, to others in England by means of several books that she wrote. For the last three years, she has been regularly publishing a Brahmo Year book. The book before us is the third of the series."

REVERENCE FOR CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

The true feeling of reverence knows no bias or bigotry. If one possesses *Satwik Shardha* (true higher feeling of reverence), he would see the beauty of noble feelings wherever found. Bhagwan was never at any time of his life a Christian and he did not at all believe in Christ as Son of God. But yet his heart was deeply moved even in seventies by the sacrifices of the Christian missionaries and he could not help expressing his great admiration and appreciation for them and developing the same feeling in others. He wrote:—

"The steadfastness of the Christian missionaries in the cause of their religion is admirable. In spite of the fact that the upshot

(or net fruit) of the labours of thousands of missionaries who have been working in India for the past scores of years in order to convert it to Christian creed and of millions of rupees that have been spent in the venture, is very small, these people do not lose courage. They go on devising newer and newer schemes to succeed in their mission."

A GLIMPSE OF BHAGWAN'S INNER FEELING OF REVERENCE.

At page 277 of the *Baradar-i-Hind* for the year 1879, we catch a glimpse of how full, glorious and brilliant was the feeling of reverence in Bhagwan's heart even then. Bhagwan wrote some account of the life of Mr. Garrison. What he felt when reviewing that old gentleman's life expressed as under :—

"To understand truth is one thing but to love it is quite another. There can be thousands who can understand and believe in any truth. But you can count on your fingers those who can sacrifice their very life out of love for it. Oh! how delighted, blessed and inspired we feel, when come across incidents of the life of such lovers on the path of knowledge of truth. Mr. Garrison died at the ripe age of 75, full of years and honours. He was an American. But he possessed life which would not only illumine the pages of American history but world history. He was a man whose teachings were full of noble thoughts. He was worshipper of truth (though in a particular and limited line). He followed what was truth in that line. His conviction had led him to feel that there was no curse greater than trafficking in human slavery. It was seared on the tablet of his heart that those who keep slaves and deal in this traffic of human beings as cattle, were void of all sense of humanity and were perfect beasts. These convictions so deeply overpowered him that he passed his entire life in the cause of the emancipation of slaves. He began his life as a cobbler. He then became a printer. Gradually he became proprietor of a press and paper in Balimoon—the citadel of slavery. There he left no stone unturned in uprooting slavery. In the beginning as it happens the slave traders considered his efforts with supreme ridicule, as a bubble of water which would soon burst and vanish. But they gradually began to feel the might of his efforts and they saw with alarm that it was impossible, by any the worst hurricanes of opposition, to extinguish the flame that burned bright in Garrison's heart and which threatened to burn to ashes the entire edifice of slavery. Their fears came to be true. The institution of slavery received a severe knock down on its head. This brave man continued his great and glorious fight for many years so much so that he raised a flag and those who were in the womb of their mother at the time he raised it found him faithful at his post even when they had grown into young men and women. This fearless champion of a noble cause had no hesitation even in laying down his whole life in its defence. He considered it a great privilege to sacrifice even his life for it. But he lived to see his great dream of life realised

and his endeavours bearing fruit. The very name of slavery was blotted out from that place. This is called living a life of man. *If life is of no substantial good to others and is passed like that of so many crawling creatures, it is an absolute waste.* May such a noble life of unselfish service in a noble cause fall to the lot of us all."

Was it possible for such a heart to remain tagged to any worldly cause? Never. And hence it did not remain so tied and was preparing to break out of all worldly or other restraints in order to wholly devote himself to his unique ideal which was gradually graining full control over him.

APPRECIATION OF THE BLESSING OF BRITISH CONNECTION AND GOVERNMENT.

Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed great regard for various national traits of character which the British people had developed. He felt deeply grateful to the British Government for strong orderly and comparatively good administration and the benefits of the enlightenment which they conferred on India. Bhagwan had witnessed days of mutiny and misrule. He compared those dark days with those of the British connection and by contrast considered their government a great blessing. He also witnessed around him his own countrymen immersed in mental darkness, in abysmal pits of false superstitious beliefs, in the mire of most pernicious social customs and above all in the most dangerous and disruptive communal hatred, and also void of those feelings of true sympathy, true service, etc., which alone can lead to strong corporate existence. He found in the contact of the British a most stimulating cause which gave a great promise of spreading illumination, and awakening higher consciousness, spirit of reform in various departments of life and spirit of progress in commerce, industries, etc. He was not unaware of the dark side of the British nation. In one place we have quoted his words where he wrote that while some people in England are devil's incarnate, there are others who are embodied angels. The Britisher has his dark side. But his bright side is also wonderfully bright. Appreciation of that wonderfully bright side is of the utmost need to our people and they will never be the worse off for appreciating it.

Bhagwan wrote in his paper in the month of January 1876, more than half a century ago:—

"We are confident that no one would deny that British regime has proved a unique blessing for us. But the question that naturally comes up into our mind, is, how far have we benefited by it? The public in general would undoubtedly endorse our opinion that our land has developed better polish and kind or civilised behaviour than before. But can this outward polish of manners and behaviour, in any way, be an index of the inner or soul-life? We say no. A deep reflection would make it clear that our people are void of that moral life in daily behaviour which is obligatory on

man. The educated young men are greater sinners in this respect. We admit that English education has liberated them from idol-worship. Their outward appearance is neat enough, but their inward life or soul is lying gross, dirty and dark, because of the absence of moral character and true religious life. It may be admitted that because of the spirit of freedom they do not feel in a mood to follow the old trodden lines of conduct. But there is true freedom—the blessings whereof are immense. The principles of this true freedom make up the warp and woof of the texture of British character. Those who consider freedom to consist of believing in nothing, murder the very spirit of freedom.”

Bhagwan said further :—

“Freedom does not mean that one should do what one chooses. Liberty does not consist in giving full and free scope to our uncontrolled human desires and passions to have their way. By liberty we understand, freedom to exercise one’s will only to the extent that Nature has intended for us, and no king, governor or corporate body has any right to rob any individual of that much freedom. None should be forced in matters of faith or in matters religious or physical which have direct reference to Nature. The English Government believes in Christ. But following the true principles of liberty it does not force us to accept Christ or Christian God or to believe in their theory of salvation as opposed to previous governments which compelled people to accept their faith.....

“We enjoy this liberty. And yet why is it that in spite of this age of freedom we are becoming degraded? So far inner life is concerned, our countrymen seem completely in the dark. They seem absolutely ignorant of higher character. Apparently they possess two eyes which have opened to them the beauty and glory of external world. But in spite of these outward eyes, as souls they are stone blind. As an animal goes and preys upon others without in the least caring whether its act is right or wrong, in the same way man hunts after the material things without regard to the rightness or wrongness of his pursuit, and acts in spite of his possessing the capacity of having that discrimination. If we mould our lives on the pattern of animals acting without discrimination, we shall be said to have wasted our opportunities for growth in this atmosphere of freedom, and deprived ourselves of its blessings. If one awakens to this fact, he would calculate his life like that great man who when asked what his age was, replied that this age was only few hours. He was in fact aged eighty. At this his enquirer asked him how it was that he considered his age to be only few hours when he looked eighty. He said in reply that he calculated his age by how much he had spent in true devotion. The reply of the sage was quite significant. Everyone of us ought to question himself how we have passed our lives. Have we passed them in.....doing all those acts which it is obligatory on us to do? If not, we are great sinners and we have lived in vain.”

"This humble journal, *Bradar-i-Hind*, was not started with any sordid or selfish object of gain. Its principal object was and is to help man to live that true life which has relation to true religion and observance of high principles of character, and that decent life which is the one obligation of man. But when we remember that this paper has only sixty or seventy subscribers, we feel pain and shame for this attitude of man towards his own great good, but we gain true knowledge of our country's stage of evolution. There is no doubt that there is a pretty large class of people who would be attracted to cheap novels, to sensational papers and spend hours in idle gossip and waste away large sums in immoral or undesirable pursuits. There is no dearth of people ready to spend lavishly in the observance of false customs, usages and rites. There are countless people who live sensual lives, eat flesh, drink liquor and pass their time in questionable haunts. But seek and you will rarely find men determined to work on the principles of self-help, anxious to do any substantial service to their land and people and ever ready to help true servants of their country. Our journal is not a costly thing such as to be beyond the power of ordinary man to subscribe to. It is also not void of any uplifting articles on moral, religious and other useful topics. As against this, we feel certain that those who have got knowledge of and feel for the present condition of our land and the extent of its needs, would recommend every man, woman and child who has received the blessings of education to go in for this journal."

In those days Bhagwan Dev Atma believed that a mythical person called God existed. But the God he believed was fashioned by his own inner growing unique soul and believed to be on the pattern of his inner life an embodiment of all truth and all goodness. It was his own self projected into his ideal, and given an embodiment.

At another place Bhagwan wrote :—

"A peep into our past history can show us that in no period of Hindu or Musalman rule or the reign of Marhattas and Sikhs, did we enjoy that freedom of thought, that peace and order, blessings of healthy and higher scientific knowledge and those opportunities to utilise our services for the good of others, as during the period of British regime..... A serious reflection would convince us of the condition of our people. Before the advent of the British, we had reached the lowest ebb in religious, social and moral life."

VI

WAR WITH UNTRUTH.

We have upto now, dealt with Bhagwan's unique activities upto the age of thirty-two in establishing the reign of goodness and destroying the reign of evil. We would now give in the briefest possible terms Bhagwan's crusade against the reign of untruth and his activities to establish the glory of Truth. His principal persecutors belonged to the three new branches of Hinduism, *viz.*, the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Sikhs—all believers in one God without a second. We would first of all take up the theme of the Arya Samaj.

THE ARYA SAMAJ.

The Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay in 1875 and in Lahore in 1877 by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. It is a society whose members have taken the greatest part in persecuting Bhagwan Dev Atma, because Bhagwan was the first man to detect and declare that the object of this society was not religious. He saw with pain that the belief in *Vedas* and other superstitions by the Hindus, was exploited by the promoters of Arya Samaj in order to serve secret political ends. This policy, being opposed to truth, shocked Bhagwan very much. The first glimpses of this policy, Bhagwan caught when Swami Dayanand knowingly proposed Rai Bahadur Dr. B. L. Ghosh, a confirmed Brahmo, and Bhagwan Dev Atma (also a Brahmo then) as President and Vice-President respectively of his proposed Arya Samaj. This was a strange experience to Bhagwan. Brahmos are well known as dead opposed to the belief of Book revelation. And yet Swami Dayanand wanted these avowed opponents of Book revelations to be the highest functionaries of a society which had laid down belief in Vedic revelation as one of the cardinal principles. Bhagwan Dev Atma there and then declined to accept that office and said to Swami Dayanand, "Panditji! how do you propose me as Vice-president of a society which believes in Vedic revelation when I do not believe in it?" But to crown his policy Swami Sahib went to the length of appointing a man who not only did not at all believe in Vedic revelation, but who had a short time back, read a lecture on the non-existence of God as the first President of his newly founded society. As a lover of truth, Bhagwan could not comprehend how any man dare come before the public in false feathers and espouse a cause in which he had no faith. This and other acts of Swami Dayanand set Bhagwan furiously thinking as to what could be the real motives behind Swami Dayanand's Vedic propaganda. And as the facts gradually dawned on his mind relating to the policy of Swami Dayanand, his love of truth received the rudest shock and his

repulsion for all untruth gave him no rest. Single-handed he raised his mighty voice against Swamiji's policy and teachings and thus incurred the severest persecutions, calumnies, abuses and vilifications at the hands of many of the Arya Samajists. This war continued up to the last and when Bhagwan Dev Atma passed away in 1929, it was an Arya editor who earned an immortal shame by venting his spleen and disgorging the accumulated filth of his Vedic heart to ease his theistic Arya mind.

The question is "Was Bhagwan Dev Atma in the right or not when he declared that the object of the Arya Samaj was not religious but that it was political and that also of not any high order?" The time has most conclusively proved that he was perfectly in the right. *The Arya Samajists themselves have been compelled by circumstances to speak out, and their own confessions or admissions, some of which we will quote just now, show how futile it is for any single man or a body of men, however strong, to long suppress truth and long delude the world with untruth* and how in the conflict between truth and untruth it is the latter that is bound in the long run to receive well-merited defeat. Bhagwan Dev Atma has stood vindicated, and as time passes, the world will have a better understanding of the nature of the war that Bhagwan Dev Atma waged against the policy and teachings of Arya Samaj and will form truer estimate of the character of those who took the most gruesome delight in horribly persecuting Bhagwan Dev Atma for his crusade against untruth.

ADMISSIONS BY LALA LAJPAT RAI—THE HERO OF THE ARYA SAMAJ.

L. Lajpat Rai who was called by his admiring countrymen as lion of the Punjab, and whose services to Punjab and outside have been recognised in various ways, lived and died as one of the greatest disciples of Swami Dayanand and a staunch advocate of the Arya Samaj. His services to D. A.-V. College are monumental. When the Non-Co-operation Movement was started for the first time by Mr. Gandhi, L. Lajpat Rai threw himself body and soul in that great war and as a heroic follower of his society, he felt that the time had come when he and other colleagues of his in the Arya Samaj should stand forth before the world as they were, and declare the true object of the Arya Samaj. He wrote an open letter to L. Hansraj, B.A. (called Mahatma by his own people) in the columns of the *Bande Matram* of 15th January, 1921, urging upon him the need of making the D. A.-V. College a national one and dis-affiliating it from the University. He wrote:—

"The principles which Swami Dayanand preached and which the first leaders of the Arya Samaj impressed upon their young friends are being widely accepted now. Arya Samajists learnt principles of Swadeshi and Non-Co-operation from Swamiji, (i. e., Swami Dayanand) long before Mahatma Gandhi's coming in the field."

Again, in the Rishi number of *Prakash* (an Arya paper of Lahore) dated 30th October, 1921, L. Lajpat Rai contributed an article wherein he said :—

"The greatest pillar of the religious reform work of the Arya Samaj was the feeling of nationality.....Arya Samaj was founded in 1877 (in the Punjab). The present principles of Arya Samaj were framed at Lahore. In shaping them in the present form such men had a hand, as from the stand-point of Sanskrit learning and religious life, were mere zeroes. At that time such men also had a hand in its development as were not believers even in the religious doctrines of the Arya Samaj but who had full sympathy with the nationalist work of the Arya Samaj."

"Further in the constitution of the D.-A. V. College and shaping the educational policy of the Arya Samaj such men had supreme hand as had feelings of nationalism and patriotism far above their religious sentiments."

"In inculcating the study and teachings of Vedas and Shastras and their interpretations, the same feelings of nationalism predominated. In fact superior kind of nationalism was the religion of the Arya Samaj." (Quoted in *Jiwan Tattva* Lahore, dated 7th February, 1922.)

We invite special attention to the portions italicised by us and leave it to our readers to decide whether there was any justification for the Arya Samajists to persecute Bhagwan Dev Atma for what was a plain truth. Truth is mightier than men and it cannot but burst forth in spite of any attempts made to suppress it. In this case truth came out of the mouth of one of the greatest pillars of the Arya Samaj itself and thus vindicated Bhagwan's judgment against Arya Swami and his teachings. Bhagwan Dev Atma, the greatest lover of truth, left a burning and living instance for all, that it is they who shall inevitably succeed who side with truth.

Again, in his own paper *Bande Matram*, dated the 20th January 1921, L. Lajpat Rai contributed an article headed, "The place of religion and politics in the Arya Samaj." In the course of that article, he said :—

"That no efforts were spared to keep the Dayanand School and College free from the control and inspection of Government and there was a time when biographies of Mazini and Garibaldi were included in the educational curriculum of Dayanand School....."

"If the accounts of the Dayanand (Vedic) College are checked, it would be found that not even one hundredth part of its total expenditure has gone to propagate the religious or Vedic teachings."

"In our opinion the condition of the country has now changed ; those things which were talked about formerly (by the Aryas—Ed.) within closed doors are now being openly declared in thoroughfares."

So the only sin which Bhagwan Dev Atma committed in the eyes of the Arya Samajists was that he had the unique insight to see and find out what these leaders of the Arya Samaj talked within closed doors and thus kept hidden from the world. We would ask our friends in the opposite camp what is meant by hypocrisy? Is it not a policy to show yourself what you are not? Is that a very noble trait? Is it a virtue? Is not hypocrisy antagonistic to truth? How then do you dare to throw mud at one who tried to save you from this hypocrisy? Bhagwan Dev Atma was an uncompromising enemy of all that was antagonistic to truth and goodness. Hence though persecuted beyond measure, he did not yield an inch of ground so far as his warfare against hypocrisy, insincerity, falsehood, etc., was concerned.

Now if we read between lines, we shall clearly see that L. Lajpat Rai made the following very important admissions about Arya Samaj:—

1. That "superior (?) kind of nationalism was the religion of the Arya Samaj." It means in plain terms that Arya Samaj had as its chief object politics and not religion.

2. That Swami Dayanand himself inculcated this primary object of Arya Samaj in the minds of his first adherents.

3. That "The principles (Swadeshi and Non-Co-operation) which Swami Dayanand preached and which the first leaders of the Arya Samaj impressed upon their young friends are being widely accepted now."

4. That they "were talked about formerly within closed doors."

5. That the "present principles of Arya Samaj were framed at Lahore. In shaping them in the present form such men had a hand in it as from the stand-point of Sanskrit learning and religious life were mere zeroes."

6. That "at that time such men had also a hand in its development as were not even believers in the religious doctrines of the Arya Samaj."

7. That "in the constitution of D. A. V. College and shaping the educational policy of the Arya Samaj such men had supreme hand as had feelings of nationalism and patriotism far above their religious sentiments."

8. That "if the accounts of Dayanand (D. A. V.) College are checked, not even one hundredth part of total expenditure has gone to propagate religious or Vedic teachings."

9. That "in inculcating the study and teaching of *Vedas* and *Shastras* and *their interpretation* the same feeling of nationalism predominated."

10. That "the greatest pillar of the religious reform work of the Arya Samaj was the feeling of nationalism."

Now it is impossible to conceive that butchers would start cow protection society or that men disbelieving in Allah and the prophet would be given the chief reins of Islam or that those disbelieving in Lord God and the Son of God would be permitted to steer the barge of Christianity. If such men were placed in those positions by Musalmans or Christians one would be justified in saying that their object must be something other than religious. The principles of Arya Samaj were shaped by men who were zeroes so far religious life is concerned. *Such men developed Arya Samaj who did not believe in its religious principles.* And yet the Arya Samajists have the hardihood to assert that theirs is a religious society. All cry for *Vedas* and Sanskrit learning and all interpretations of *Vedas* were motivated by political considerations though all these things were talked within closed doors.

How this policy corrupted the vital soul springs of Arya Samajists would be clear from one instance that we record here. In the year 1909 several leading Arya Samajists were hauled up in Patiala on the charge of spreading disaffection against the Government. And the society about which it is now openly claimed that "Arya Samajists learnt principles of Swadeshi and Non-Co-operation from Swamiji long before Mahatma Gandhi came in the field" showed a white feather. Mahatma Munshi Ram *alias* Swami Shradhanand said then in a public lecture which was published in the columns of *The Hindustan* newspaper of Lahore, dated 3rd December, 1909 (now defunct) that Arya Samajists were not against the British *raj* and that "anybody who wanted to create disturbance in this *raj* in which he gets peace and comfort would not be an Arya Samajist." Further that Swami Dayanand had taught them that "if the British left India to-day, to-morrow our throats would be cut off."

While now the leaders openly declare that the politics forms the greatest pillar of the religious reform of the Arya Samaj and politics in fact formed the very religion of the Arya Samaj, Swami Shradhanand had the courage or temerity to absolutely deny that Arya Samaj had anything to do with politics. While reporting the speech of one of the professors of his own Gurukula (Mr. Balkrishan, M. A.), in the columns of his own paper *Sat Dharm Pracharak*, dated 2nd March, 1910, he wrote :—

"Shriman Balkrishan assured Dewan Sahib and the Government that just as Arya Samaj had engaged only in the religious and social work, *it will ever remain so in future and will not waste its powers in the delusive web of politics.*"

He wrote further :—

"What has Arya Samaj to do with politics? *He could say with full confidence that Arya Samaj had nothing to do with politics.* Arya Samaj was indebted to His Honour Sir Louis Dane and Dewan Sahib that they had given it consolation at the time of calamity."

The fear had then warped the minds even of the greatest Arya Samaj leaders. But when conditions changed, the same Swami Shradhanand said on the occasion of Dayanand's centenary at Mathura :—

“Veda does not allow politics to be separated from Dharma or religion.”

“None should call himself an Arya who does not wish to be politically free.”

“The Arya would rule over the whole world.”

“Rishi Dayanand had taught non-co-operation with *adharmi* even if he be a Chakravarty Raja.”

All this is a most interesting and instructive study of this society. An absolute enemy of all hypocrisy and falsehood could not but come in severe conflict with all those who believed in one thing and yet openly preached another, as he saw in all this, the destruction of the noblest springs of soul-life.

With this introduction let us advert to the life story of Bhagwan's fight with untruth in the Arya Samaj.

WELCOME TO SWAMIJI AND HIS CHIVALROUS DEFENCE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was a leader of the Brahmo Samaj in 1877. He had won a corner in the hearts of his countrymen because of his oratorical, journalistic and other powers. In all the public activities of the Punjab in the domains of religious, social and even political reform, he took the most prominent part. He conducted in those days an Urdu paper *Bradar-i-Hind*. As editor he received from Swami Dayanand two handbills and he instantly wrote a review on them which is published on pages 62-63 of the February 1877 issue of his paper. It shows how in the beginning Bhagwan offered a hearty welcome to Dayanand's public activities and recommended him to the public support. Bhagwan wrote :—

“We have received two notices or handbills from Swami Dayanand Saraswati. One contains the provisional principles which he has laid down for the promotion of various Arya Samajis which he means to establish. The second contains information about the publication from Benares of a monthly paper which would deal with original *Ved mantras* and their commentaries in Sanskrit and Hindi. Uptil now Swamiji has completed commentary of ten thousand *Shalokas*. He is daily busy in that work. It is the object of Swamiji to publish all *Vedic mantras* through the vehicle of his monthly paper, so that it may be easy for men to read and understand. Swamiji wants to prove by these publications that *Vedas* do not teach idol-worship, or worship of any created object. What greater good news should the readers of Hindi and Sanskrit expect than this?..... We hope that Hindi knowing public of our land would welcome this great and good work or venture and would consider it as their sacred duty to help it. We offer our

congratulations to the Swami for his noble example and courage, and with all our heart and soul we extend to him our best wishes for his success."

It was in the month of April, 1877 that the Brahmo leaders invited him to Lahore. How Bhagwan championed his cause can be evident from the following article which we find in the June issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1877 :—

"Swami Dayanand left Ludhiana on the 19th April, 1877 and arrived at Lahore the same day. He was lodged in the garden of Ratan Chand Dahriwala. The public was anxiously looking for his entry into Lahore. As soon as Swamiji set his foot in Lahore, numbers after numbers of men flocked to have his *darshan*. The Brahmos were pleased very much to see him amidst them as the move to invite Swamiji to Lahore took its birth from them. For the first three or four days the audience congregated in that garden and listened to the debates and discussions of Swamiji. It was however proposed to arrange for some suitable place in the heart of the city where Swamiji might deliver his lectures for the good of the greater number of people. It was settled that the building known as Bawli Sahib may be fixed for Swamiji's lectures as it possessed both advantages of being commodious and situated in the heart of the city. This place was advertised as the place fixed for Swamiji's addresses. A very large audience assembled to listen to his first lecture on *Vedas*. But as it was widely known that Swamiji demolishes idol-worship, the orthodox people and specially Brahmins assumed at once an attitude of hostility to Swamiji. Hence in the very first meeting they created tumult and bustle and any amount of disturbance. If the promoters had not previously arranged for police all this would have ended in a big riot. Swamiji delivered one more lecture there."

"But as it was feared that some day rowdy element may kick up a row there and it was observed that a lot of disturbance was caused there, it was deemed expedient to give up that place. It was decided to hold meetings in Brahmo Samaj Mandir. Swamiji delivered some lectures in that Mandir and perfect peace and order reigned there as was but expected. People heard Swamiji in all silence."

"During all this, the owner of the house in which Swamiji lodged—though a big man who had himself agreed to accommodate Swamiji then—was influenced by others to such an extent that he asked Swamiji to vacate his house. The friends and admirers of Swamiji at once arranged for another house—a more commodious and better situated—for Swamiji's stay and was removed to the new quarters. This new house or bungalow belongs to our distinguished countryman Khan Bahadur Doctor Rahim Khan. One can form estimate of the generosity and large-heartedness of Doctor Sahib from the fact that though he is a Muslim, he very readily responded to the appeal made to him and in all willingness placed his bungalow at the disposal of Swamiji. The Swamiji shifted to the new

bungalow. For this generosity of the Khan Bahadur, the hosts of Swamiji feel deeply indebted and it is hoped they will never forget this favour. The new bungalow is so spacious and its compound is so big that after the Swamiji shifted to it he has been holding even his meetings there instead of holding them at Brahma Mandir."

"In his new quarter Swamiji has led such a crusade against idolatry that it has caused a ferment in the camp of the orthodox and the Brahmans. When the Brahmans saw that many a sheep was running away from their fold, they could not sit idle. They held a meeting of the distinguished Pandits and invited Pandit Bhanu Dutt Sahib of Sat Sabha, Punjab. Pandit Bhanu Dutt is a preacher of a society which propagates the worship of incorporeal God and he is himself well known for his antagonism to idolatry. When Swami Dayanand came to Lahore, Pandit Bhanu Dutt visited him frequently. All the Pandits of the committee took Pandit Bhanu Dutt to task for this. They charged him as being a follower of Dayanand, "You follow the creed of Swami Dayanand" they burst forth. This non-plussed the Pandit. In his bewildered state, he said, "Who says my creed corresponds to the creed of Swamiji. I believe as you believe, and if it be your pleasure that I should stand against Swami, I lay my services heart and soul at your feet." All the Pandits assembled there were heartily pleased to hear such an admission from the mouth of Pandit Bhanu Dutt and they appointed him as their secretary. When the educated friends and acquaintances of Pandit Bhanu Dutt received the news that the said Pandit had associated himself with a society whose main plank was establishment of idolatry and proving it on the authority of the *Vedas*, they felt shocked and surprised as they knew his personal beliefs but too well. We personally felt not only surprised but pained; for the Pandit has been often visiting us. In all his talks he had all along expressed his disbelief in idolatry. He one day told us that Swami Dayanand wanted him to be a missionary of his cause and remain with him and deliver lectures at various places and that he was himself a great admirer of Swamiji. "I am so much entangled in my home affairs" he said, "that though Swamiji undertakes to defray all my family expenses, I cannot muster courage to openly associate with him though I very strongly appreciate his mission."

"Our readers can form an estimate of Pandit Bhanu Dutt's character from all this and can understand the motives that have led him to join the assembly of the orthodox Pandits. Pandit Bhanu Dutt from that day ceased all intercourse with Swamiji. Some days after handbills were circulated that Pandit Bhanu Dutt would deliver a lecture in support of idolatry and prove it as sound on the authority of *Vedas*. Besides this, he has delivered two more lectures on the Hindu Gods and supported idol-worship."

From this it is evident how Bhagwan Dev Atma fought for

Swamiji so fearlessly. But he had not as yet formed any definite opinion about him and his policy. Hence in the concluding portion of the article Bhagwan wrote :—

“ But all such questions—as to what the teachings and principles of Swamiji are ; what kind of reform work he expects to do in our land by his lectures in various places ; how far his addresses are influencing or are capable of influencing the minds of the youths ; how far his own beliefs correspond to or are opposed to Brahmo Samaj ; how far has Swamiji succeeded in his matchless efforts and how far he would succeed in the end—we intend to deal with in our subsequent issues.”

PAINFUL EXPERIENCE OF SWAMIJI'S LIFE AND TEACHINGS.

In the July 1877 issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote again a long article on “ Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Ved.” This article is illustrative of Bhagwan Dev Atma's own wonderful temperament. Though he appreciated enthusiastically some of the activities of the Swami and expressed his great regard for his learning, he was able in his unique light to read plainly the motives of the Swami behind his apparent religious fervour. *He very clearly discerned that it was expediency more than love of truth which animated all Swamiji's efforts and work.* As Bhagwan Dev Atma hated all kinds of policies which spelled sacrifice and death of truth, he could not but feel shocked at all this. Being a unique lover of truth it was impossible for him to sit with folded hands and let the truth be trampled upon. He knew he was at that time the only person who read the inner motives of the Swamiji behind his Vedic propaganda. He knew that many educated people had grown enamoured of Swamiji's policy and teachings and they would fiercely resent any exposure of or even disagreement with him. Bhagwan knew the price he would have to pay for his loyalty to truth and he willingly offered it and stood ever ready to pay it. Bhagwan said :—

“ In our May issue we had made a brief mention of Swamiji's entry in Lahore and the series of addresses that he delivered. We had given an undertaking too that in some subsequent issue, we would deal with the principles that Swami cherished, the subject matter of his various addresses, his policy and how far his beliefs corresponded to the principles of Brahmo Samaj and how far they went counter to them, etc., etc. We advert in this issue to all these topics.”

“ Swamiji's views are broad and they mostly tally with the advanced beliefs of the modern age. He seems to be very learned though his education is confined only to Sanskrit. His association with the enlightened English educated men has not only broadened his outlook and converted him into a truly learned and enlightened Pandit and has thus taken him out of the rut of the narrowmindedness and orthodoxy in which the Pandits of our land have almost invariably fallen, but in certain cases his views seem to be far in advance of those entertained by general English educated man,

Apparently he seems charged with fervour for national reform and love of his land though it is too early to form an exact estimate of his motives whether they are selfish and are based on self-interest or otherwise. Experience alone would give us further data. Time alone is the great revealer. However we expect (according to our present knowledge of him) a good contribution to our national advance and reform from him."

"So far religious reform is concerned, Swamiji seems an avowed enemy of idolatry. He has been labouring hard these days to destroy it root and branch. It would not be improper if we call him one of the greatest iconoclasts. From this point of view his support to Brahmo cause which stands for pure monotheism and which is anxious to remove all forms of idol-worship is heaven sent. He deserves as much praise at our hands for this as possible."

"Swamiji does not stand only for religious reform, but he seems bent upon removing from our land several social evils, *viz.* child marriage, etc. He is very anxious to promote the cause of female education and female emancipation. He believes that so long the woman of India is not educated and emancipated this land should expect no great advance. In short, the object of Swamiji's mission seems to be to remove ignorance and narrowmindedness, to propagate education, to bring about national unity and thus to bring about country's advance."

"After this brief review of his activities let us advert to his religious beliefs. Like several other men Swamiji too is inclined to believe in revelation with this difference that while many other believers in book revelation, declare that God has revealed himself to other nations besides the Aryas and given them books, Swamiji believes that the only book revelation that God made was Vedic revelation (and no other). According to him all knowledge is included in *Vedas* and the ultimate and fundamental teachings of all knowledge respecting steam, telegraph, railways, etc., have been provided in *Vedas* by the all merciful God. All truth and all wisdom is found in *Vedas*. At the beginning of creation God couched in a few *mantras* the whole knowledge of Universe and its infinite truths. He has performed a miracle of confining the ocean in a pitcher. Thus *Vedas* are the encyclopædia of all truths and all sciences. Though one can carry the *Vedas* in one hand or pressed under one's arm—so light they are so far their weight is concerned—they are the repositories of the most precious treasures of all kinds of knowledge. Swamiji does not however claim to possess all knowledge of God-given truths but he expects that with the advance of time and progress of mankind the *inner* truths of *Vedas* would stand revealed in all their splendour."

"Swamiji has not however advanced any such reasons in support of this claim as can stand the test of logic, higher criticism and facts, and which should be readily acceptable to the enlightened minds. Few arguments that he puts forward are those stereotyped ones which other believers in book revelations ordinarily give in

support of their books. According to Swamiji, man's intellectual powers such as memory, imagination, thought, etc., with which God Almighty has blessed him, do not in themselves possess any power to lead man to truth without the guidance of the God-given knowledge. Hence God felt the need of confining all His knowledge in a few *mantras* and revealed them to four Rishis. These four Rishies taught these to others and thus knowledge spread and men began to be learned and wise. This is the strongest argument which Swamiji has advanced to substantiate his claim about Vedic revelation. We leave it to such of our readers as are free from any bias or love of expediency, to judge for themselves what weight such an argument can have so far as reason, facts, logic and higher criticism are concerned. We refrain at this stage from dealing with natural philosophy which is well known to those who know natural history. That history deals with all those principles which have led to the progress of man from primitive stage to the civilised condition. At some other time we mean to advert to the description and amplification of those laws of Nature which deal directly with the intellectual progress of man."

"We have a saying in English 'Habit is second nature.' It is this habit which is at the root of those myths and dogmas which mankind harbours. These myths and dogmas have no reason behind them or they would not be myths and they would cease to be dogmas. When any ideas become current and man begins to accept them for some time, he forms a bias for them and then clings to them without rhyme or reason. He transmits them to his progeny. Whether right or wrong they ordinarily hold such a vicious grip on man that he lives and dies cherishing them. The stories of hobgoblins and ghosts which grip the imagination of children, retain their fear even when they grow up to be men. Even when they come to realise that the fear of ghosts or hobgoblins is an absurd fear, their hearts still retain the traces of it which manifests itself on hundreds of occasions. This is a weakness of human nature of which every man can have personal knowledge from his personal experiences. There is no race or nation on the surface of the earth which does not more or less cherish myths and dogmas. These myths and dogmas are so tenacious in their hold that they seem to possess the minds of even some of the most learned men of all the lands. Though these learned people have lived all their lives dealing with logical truths and philosophic principles and thus have ventilated the chambers of mind with fresh air of higher criticism and thought, yet in matters religious they retain the poisonous vapours of myths and dogmas and declare their belief in things, which on the very face are absurd, illogical and childish and opposed to truth, and which excite laughter even among common people who are not obsessed by them. This is called human inconsistency. It betrays man very much. Wherever present, it leads man unconsciously into self-contradictions."

"This is the reason why a Hindu, who has from his infancy been wedded to the belief in Vedic revelation, becomes in his youth so saturated with this dogma, that though he himself has never even seen *Vedas* and is absolutely innocent of the very characters of Sanskrit language, and all through his life he never gets any chance of reading or even hearing their verses, he very boldly proclaims that he knows that *Vedas* are revealed. He may be given very sound logical reasons against the very theory of revelations which a man of common sense can readily accept, and yet his biases blind him so utterly that though he possesses eyes he sees not. He is deaf and he is blind to those very apparent truths which explode the dogma of all kinds of book revelation and which form a touchstone for testing truth from untruth."

"This is the reason why educated and half-educated people have very readily welcomed Swamiji's declaration in Vedic revelation. As Hindus they have inherited the tendency to believe in Vedic revelation. From their surroundings during childhood they imbibed this belief. And when they saw a learned Pandit preaching this dogma, they became strengthened in their belief. *The biases leave man stranded and he loses the power of appreciating the voice of reason, facts and logic* against his acquired and cherished beliefs and dogmas. This is the reason why even such persons are going forward to get their names enrolled in the list of believers in Vedic revelation who have never studied them, nay, who have never known in their lives even Sanskrit characters. They believe because Swamiji says so."

"There are some persons among those who have given their names in the list, who do not at all believe in book revelation but who make outward profession in it as a matter of policy. But we cannot consider them immune from the charge of hypocrisy merely because expediency or diplomacy is considered by a man in general as indispensable in politics and by some as indispensable also in religion."

"In the first place *we do not consider recourse to expediency or hypocrisy as legitimate even in politics*, and we believe that with the progress of time this evil would stand discredited. In the second place all know that *expediency or hypocrisy is fatal to religion*. Then how can you call them religious who favour or follow hypocrisy or expediency in religion? Does man think that God's kingdom is like man's kingdom, where too, without adopting crooked policy one can never succeed to enter? We throw not. If you accept religion for its own sake, then you must consider your good here and hereafter to lie not in defending or pursuing the wrong policy of expediency but in rooting it out completely and for ever."

"We deplore the fact that even Swamiji appears wedded to this wrong policy of expediency. If it were not so, how was it possible for such a learned and enlightened man as Swamiji to have declared

all old commentaries on *Vedas* wrong, to have pronounced even the translations of *Vedas* made by modern scholars absurd and to have given an altogether new and forced interpretation to Vedic *Mantras* to suit the modern needs? Is it not true that such an attempt of Swamiji would be like adorning an old Hindu woman—toothless and sightless, worn out and all wrinkled and with almost both feet in the grave—in modern most Parisian fashion, and sending her to attend the ball given by the Viceroy and exposing her in the dazzling lights to the laughter and ridicule of the young civilians and officers? Would she be considered a beautiful lady because she is dressed in modern fashion? Would she not be hooted as an old hag? By misinterpreting the Vedic *Mantras*, divorcing them from the natural interpretations as the thoughts of the primitive men and by so distorting them as to give out, that they possess the modern Western cultivated thoughts and sciences, Swamiji has proved the truth of the above illustration. In making new *Vedas* out of the old, he does not all at once give up the ordinary interpretation of the words like fire and air, but in his *Rig Veda* he has given double meaning to them. The one which is old and the other which he wants to use. Thus he says that fire and air refer to God, and hence prayers to fire and air according to him are nothing but prayers addressed to One God. Thus in the first interpretation he called fire and air as material and changeable, but in the second he calls them immaterial and unchangeable. We wonder how Swamiji makes bold to reconcile two altogether antagonistic and mutually contradictory interpretations of the word and thus violates all the principles of logic and natural philosophy. Our astonishment knows no bound when we see many educated men most credulously taking up the cry of Swamiji and with eyes blindfolded by the veil of biases and dogmas, thoughtlessly declaring that whatever Swamiji says and writes is truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

"It is a war cry of the lovers of truth that when a man sees truth being massacred by untruth and he does not bestir himself to stand in defence of the truth, he thereby exposes himself to the charge of a murderer. Hence though the lovers of expediency may feel offended at the voice that we have raised against it, we feel *we cannot sit with folded hands when truth is being sacrificed.*"

And Bhagwan concluded the article by some quotations of Vedic *Mantras* to show how far belief in revelation had any legs to stand upon.

GREAT SCHOLARS SPEAK.

After the conclusion of his article quoted by us in the last chapter, Bhagwan made his position quite clear. He declared in the most unequivocal terms that it was impossible for him to sit silent and watch as a spectator the merciless sacrifice of truth at the altar of expediency. This meant war between two opposed and conflicting forces. On the one side was Bhagwan Dev Atma, the

ardent lover of truth wedded to it under all circumstances and on the other was a movement which was mainly political but dressed in the religious garb, in order to catch the hearts of those wedded to the superstitious belief of Vedic revelation. It was a movement whose principles were laid out by men who "from the stand-point of Sanskrit learning and religious life were mere zeroes" and who even did not believe in the religious principles of the Arya Samaj. This movement owed its development to such persons as did neither believe in God nor in Vedic revelation. Swami Dayanand interpreted Vedic *Mantras* to suit his hidden object as is admitted by veteran Arya Samajists. A learned writer once remarked, "When one turns to the Vedic hymns themselves and to his, (*i.e.*, Dayanand's) interpretation of them, it becomes exceedingly difficult to believe in his straight-forwardness and sincerity! One can hardly imagine any learned mind believing what he (Dayanand) says."

Several distinguished Sanskrit scholars—both Indian and European—expressed emphatically that Dayanand's interpretation of *Vedas* was not genuine. For instance :—

OPINION OF PROF. MAX MÜLLER.

Prof. Max Muller whom Sir George Birdwood calls as "the pride of two great nations, the German and the English, and the great Rishi of the whole Indian race," wrote a letter to a great philanthropist of Bombay, the late Mr. Malabari dated Oxford, February the 2nd, 1882, in which while explaining the purpose of translations of his famous Hibbert lectures, he incidentally referred to the interpretation of *Vedas* by Swami Dayanand as follows :—

"As I told you on a former occasion my thoughts while writing these lectures were far more frequently with the people of India than with my audience in Westminster Abbey. I wanted to tell those few at least, whom I might hope to reach in English, what the true historical value of their ancient religion is, as looked upon, not from an exclusively European or Christian, but from a historical, point of view. I wish to warn them against two dangers, that of undervaluing or despising the ancient national religion, as is done so often by your half Europeanised youths, and that of overvaluing it and interpreting it, as it was never meant to be interpreted—of which you may see a painful instance in Dayanand Saraswati's labours on the *Vedas*. Accept the *Vedas* as an ancient historical document, containing thoughts in accordance with the character of an ancient and simple-minded race of men, and you will be able to admire it and to retain some of it, particularly the teachings of Upanishadas even in these modern days. But discover in it steam engines, and electricity and European philosophy and morality, and you deprive it of its true character, you destroy its real value, and you break the historical continuity that ought to bind present to the past." (*Vide Life of Malabari* by Dewan Dayaram, page 71.)

OPINION OF DR. H. D. GRISWOLD, M.A., SANSKRIT SCHOLAR AND
PRINCIPAL, F. C. COLLEGE.

Dr. H. D. Griswold, M.A., a retired Principal of the Forman Christian College, Lahore, and a Sanskrit Scholar, published an ably written pamphlet in 1897, named *Dayanand interpretation of the word Deva in Rig Veda*. He pointed out therein that the correct interpretation of ancient scriptures "does not mean putting in ones own thoughts but rather the leading out of the author's thoughts." Hence he said "due regard must be paid (1) to the etymology of the word, (2) to contemporary usage, (3) to the context when the word has more than one possible meaning.

He complained that Dayanand laid "great emphasis on the etymology" even when it does not tally with "actual Vedic usage." (P. 20). For instance, while the great Vedic commentator Yaska calls देव इत्यथन *i.e.*, Deva as a heaven dweller and says योदेवः देवता (p. 3) *i.e.*, Deva means a Devta and this meaning (*i.e.*, God) satisfies the context of every passage in the *Rig Veda* (p. 22); Dayanand makes it to mean "learned men," "excellent organs of sense," "excellent seasons," "excellent qualities of knowledge," "excellent pleasures," "excellent things" etc., etc. (p. 11).

Thus :—

"In a high dictatorial fashion, he (Dayanand) assigns to the word Deva whatever meanings suit his purpose! This is not exegesis, the drawing out of the meaning in a passage but rather negesis, if I may be allowed to coin the word *i.e.*, reading into the passage of the meaning which one desires to get out of it."

Again he observes that

"Due regard must be paid to the grammatical construction of the words *i.e.*, a nominative must be taken as nominative, vocative as vocative, an imperative as an imperative and indicative as indicative, an active as an active, a second person as a second person, a third as a third person, etc. This canon too is perfectly clear and self-evident." (p. 6).

After examining the translation of a few Vedic *Mantras*, the learned Professor observes :—

"But the most remarkable thing.....is that in the few passages considered, no less than ten imperatives are interpreted absolutely as nominatives. What is this but trifling with the text of *Vedas*. To write अत्रन्यत्यय ; or लड्येलो *i.e.*, there is an irregularity here or the imperative is used in the sense of the indicative, without giving a particle of proof, is no better than to call white black, because it suits one's purpose so to do. *Such interpretation or rather mis-interpretation is nothing less than vicious.*

At page 23, he starts a question :—

"The question arises inevitably :—"Was he honest in explaining the *Rig Veda* in this way? One is strangely tempted at times to answer in the negative."

OPINION OF PANDIT NAVIN CHANDRA ROY, FORMER
PRINCIPAL OF ORIENTAL COLLEGE, LAHORE.

Pandit Navin Chandra Roy—then Fellow of the Panjab University and Principal of Oriental College, Lahore—was well known in his time for utmost integrity of character and straightforwardness. He won the esteem of all those who ever came in contact with him. In his letter to the Founder of Dev Samaj, Bhagwan Dev Atma, dated 13th May, 1890, he wrote :—

“ Now in reply to your further questions, I can only say as clearly and precisely as I can, that it is a great puzzle to me, how a Sanskrit scholar and earnest reformer like Pandit Dayanand Saraswati interpreted the *Vedas* in the manner he did. There are however only two alternatives, *viz* , either he was self-deluded or he cared more to carry out his policy than for truth.”

OPINION OF PANDIT MAHESH CHANDRA NIAYA RATAN, C.I.E.,
PRINCIPAL, SANSKRIT COLLEGE, CALCUTTA.

Maha Mahopadhyaya Pandit Mahesh Chandra Niaya Ratan, C.I.E., then Principal of Sanskrit College, Calcutta, in his letter to Bhagwan Dev Atma dated 26th April 1890, wrote as follows :—

“ As to the second question you have put me, whether in my opinion a Sanskrit Scholar like Pandit Dayanand Saraswati could sincerely interpret the *Vedas* as he has done, I have to say as follows :—In my opinion, and I may be wrong, he could not have been sincere. I have conversed with him and from his writings I was convinced with the whole world that he was possessed of intellect of the highest order, and such a person could not, I believe, have fallen into so grave an error as to believe sincerely what he wrote about the *Vedas*. I believe that his interpretation of the *Vedas* was intended by him to be an ingenious trick to show the stretch of human brain and thereby to increase his fame. But *I do not think he believed in what interpretation he put.*”

OPINION OF PT. SHANKER PANDURANG, M.A., A GREAT SANSKRIT
SCHOLAR OF BOMBAY PRESIDENCY.

Pandit Shanker Pandurang, M. A , a great and reputed Sanskrit scholar of the Bombay Presidency, late Oriental Translator of the Bombay Government, translator of the *Rig Veda* in Marhatti and English and for some time Prime Minister of one of the States in the Presidency, wrote a very remarkable and long letter on the policy that underlay Pandit Dayanand's Vedic interpretation. He wrote :—

“ I do not believe that he had himself faith in the correctness of the translations which he made of the *Vedas*. Nor do I believe that he could have very much faith in the Vedic *samahita* as a divine revelation, though I am sure he must have believed honestly in the good which the maintenance of the long established authority

of the *Veda* was calculated to produce if rightly directed."

"I have no sympathy whatever with his interpretations of his Vedic texts, because I believe those interpretations are fundamentally wrong and entirely unreliable inasmuch as they are made to suit foregone conclusions. *He translated the Vedas not as it was but as he wished it to be.*"

In the August issue of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1877, Bhagwan Dev Atma gave opinions of several eminent Sanskrit scholars who unanimously condemned Swamiji's interpretation of *Vedas* as insincere during Swamiji's own life-time. They included that of Principal Griffith of Benares Sanskrit College, Principal, Tony, M.A., of Presidency College, Calcutta, Pandit Rishi Kesh Bhattacharya of Oriental College, Lahore, and Pandit Bhagwan Das of Government College, Lahore.

PROFESSIONS AND PRACTICES IN THE ARYA SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma never in his own life divorced professions from practices. Whatever he believed, he proved true to it by his every day life. He illustrated in his daily behaviour that he loved truth for its own sake. It was a matter of supreme indifference to him, how the world looked at him whether with favour or frown, when he unfurled the banner of any truth that dawned on him in his growing light. It therefore considerably shocked him when he saw any person standing pledged before the world to certain reform and yet violating the very reform at the first hour of temptation. The Arya Samaj as a Society declared itself as an exponent of social and religious reform. And yet its first President at Lahore went down with a crash when the time for trial came. He had to marry. He was associated with a society (Arya Samaj) which openly preached against child marriage and all idolatrous rites and ceremonies. And yet he entered into wedlock with a girl aged hardly eight or nine years. She was betrothed already to some other person. But this President arranged for the dissolution of that engagement and himself married her by Brahmanical rites which he used to denounce from public platform. He or his Samajic friends gave a flattering unction to their heart that time was not ripe for putting into practice the reforms they advocated and instead of acknowledging their weakness and feeling ashamed of disloyalty to the cause they stood for, they considered it a sensible policy not to take any step which threatened to create public opposition. All this was painful to the lover of truth and goodness—Bhagwan Dev Atma—and when he saw evil riding rough shod on goodness, he cast to winds all considerations of self and plunged into a furious war with the organised forces of expediency and falsehood. We quote below from the October issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1877 the dialogue which would show how the Arya Samaj enrolled members in the beginning and how practices were divorced from professions in it:—

CONVERSATIONS OF SOME PERSONS ON THE ARYA SAMAJ
MATTERS.

Brahmo Samajist.—Yes friend ? where are you coming from ?

Arya Samajist.—I am just now returning from Samaj.

B.—Any fresh news of development of the Arya Samaj ?

A.—You know more than I. Why do you then enquire from me.

B.—You seem mistaken. You are a member of Arya Samaj. How is it possible for me to know more of it than you ?

A.—(smiled and said.)—What ! Is it hidden from you that like many others I am also a member not by choice but by force ? So far as the inner working and the principle of the Samaj are concerned and how far they tally with the daily practices of its members are matters which are now an open secret to all.

B.—Can you tell me how you have become a member not by choice but under pressure ?

A.—Strange ! you do not know how these two or four hundred members have been enrolled on the list of Arya Samaj. The leading members of the Arya Samaj have made it a daily duty of their life to visit persons in their houses. The man visited by them tells them openly that he has no faith in their creed and is not prepared to put into practice their principles. But they tell him not to have any scruples about belief and practices. He could believe whatever he liked and do whatever he wished. All that they wanted was that he should permit them to put his name in the list of members as that would raise the dignity and prestige of the Samaj. This talk silences some and from some weak souls wrings a reply "all right." Such souls are admitted at once as members. You can tell me now, is all this voluntary or done under pressure ?

A spectator.—I endorse all that you say. I have personal experience of this. One day some leading Samajists came to my house also, and asked me to become a member of the Arya Samaj. I told them to excuse me as I had no faith in their principles, and as an honest man I could not associate myself as a member of such a society with the principles of which I had no sympathy.

One from the public.—I also endorse all this. Once these people offered me to hold an office in Samaj when I did not believe in their principles. But I definitely declined the offer.

B.—Mr. Arya Samajist, you have given us some insight into the *modus operandi* of the Samaj so far as the enlisting of members for Samaj is concerned. But please tell us something about their life and practices. According to a Persian proverb when two hearts unite they can move a mountain. Now that you have some hundreds as members they must have done something very

substantial in eliminating social evils and introducing practical reforms ?

A.—What do you mean ? Do you take Arya Samaj for a . . . that you expect all reforms at once ?

B.—I do not understand you ? Will you make yourself clear ?

A.—I am sufficiently clear. The . . . has become very unpopular in society because of its practical reforms so much so that people are afraid of associating with it. Do you want that the members of the Arya Samaj like those of the . . . Samaj should break caste bonds, abolish child marriage and introduce adult marriages, remove all superstitions attached to *Shradh*, do away with idols, stop giving gifts to undeserving Brahmans and thus get a bad name in the public ?

B.—Please Sir, if the Arya Samaj does not intend to introduce reforms why is it established at all ? What good does it do ?

A.—It is expected to do as much good as other societies which have been established as religious sects—no more no less. But one great good that Arya Samaj is out to herald in this world is that every Sunday besides prayers, even lectures are delivered in which speeches are made against the current social evils.

B.—You think Hindu society does not groan under social evils ?

A.—It does and the . . . Samaj is extirpating the social evils of Hindus. Our Swamiji Maharaj is also speaking against them.

B.—If so, why do you denounce . . . Samaj people for laying an axe at the root of evils which your Swamiji also condemns ?

A.—I do not condemn all members but only such who break some of our national customs.

B.—Do you mean by “national customs” caste system, child marriage, etc ?

A.—Yes.

B.—Then is it not manly to remove those degrading customs ? Does not your own Swamiji speak against them ? Is it right and proper to condemn people for such noble acts ? Is it consistent with humanity to withhold admiration from them for doing these laudable things ?

A.—I do not say that such reformers deserve blame. But the world does look askance at them.

B.—Do not talk of common people. They do not spare your Swamiji too. Some call him *kirani* (Christian). Some call him spy of Christian missionaries. Some call him even atheist. Even Arya Samaj members are not spared. When any member passes, people point their finger at him and say, “There goes Dayanandi.”

A.—That does not matter much. So long we confine ourselves merely to professions people do not get so indignant as when they would if we translated them into deeds. We talk of certain customs as evil. But we do not outrage the public by breaking such customs. From the time that our Samaj has been founded, we have not set one practical instance of reform and thus by deeds we have not shown that we are enemies of current customs.

One from the public.—Yes, yes, our friend is perfectly in the right. We have ourselves come across some cases in which the leading members of the Arya Samaj have bent in homage to the current customs and thus caused no flutter in the camp of the orthodox circles. I am going to give you a unique instance of this (slavish) submission to current customs which would amply corroborate the statement of our friend, the Arya.

B.—Please tell us that.

A.—Yes, I am going to narrate it. You know our President of the Arya Samaj.

B.—Yes, we know him. He is Lala . . . with whose name is appended the title “Afzal-ul-Ulma.”

A.—Yes, he is the very man. He himself—this important dignitary—has very recently celebrated his *own* marriage with a girl hardly aged eight or nine. This slip of a girl is absolutely innocent of what is meant by marriage. She does not know what is meant by husband. But because Lalaji was anxious not to go against the current orthodox customs, he went to the extent of having for his wife a minor girl who was already betrothed to another person. He arranged through one or two friends of his to have her first engagement broken and the marriage was celebrated secretly in a friend's house. Thereafter, he announced his marriage by having festive celebrations.

B.—Strange! What an illustration of reform by the President of Arya Samaj! But Swamiji has declared a marriage of this kind to be wrong. In his *Sattyarth Parkash*, while discoursing on marriage, he has proved that marriage with a girl of eight or nine is opposed to the will of God as shown in *Vedas*. But why did Lalaji go against the dictates of God-revealed *Vedas* and bend his heart in homage to *Puranas* of Brahmans which Arya Samaj condemns? How can those who are themselves misguided lead others to the right path?

A.—You seem to be very fond of consistency in conduct. You want word and deed to harmonise. Your surprise would know no bounds when I tell you the rites and ceremonies which Lalaji had to pass through in his marriage.

B.—Yes, kindly tell us that also.

A.—Not only the marriage itself was a child marriage, but no reform of any kind was introduced in the marriage ceremonies and rites. Like orthodox marriages, Brahmans were called to celebrate it.

B.—The orthodox marriages are performed by idolatrous rites. Is it not so?

A.—Yes, idolatrous rites were observed. When one has to perform child marriage why to show scruples at these rites.

B.—Strange! Is this what you people mean consistency with principle? If the President tramples down the principles of the Samaj why would members respect them? Where is the need for publishing in glowing colours the ten principles of the Arya Samaj? Is it not meant that one should abide by them? These principles demand that worship of one incorporeal God alone is right and in case of a conflict between truth and untruth the untruth is to be at once sacrificed. The Arya Samaj declares that all true teachings are given in *Vedas*. Do *Vedas* permit marriage with a girl of eight or nine years? Do they teach homage to idols? Do they teach breaking of engagements for no reason? All these things are not only opposed to religion and morality but even reason and common sense. These persons therefore who, led by sordid selfish motives, murder all higher principles, not only become thereby guilty of grave wrong but throw hundreds of persons who imitate their life into the vortex of wrong. Such examples are a great misfortune for our race and country, specially when they are set by persons who are expected by our motherland to give better account of themselves. Mother India expects that her worthy sons would rise, heal up her wounds, dry her tears and rescue her from the demon of evil customs. But instead of doing that these sons, led by their selfishness, unmanliness and cowardice, aggravate her wrongs and lacerate her heart. With hair dishevelled and tears streaming out of her eyes, Mother India laments the lot of these ungrateful sons in most piteous tones."

Here the *Syapa* is published which we would recommend our readers to read in original in Urdu.

In our own time, we have come to know more about this President of the Arya Samaj from the mouth of the distinguished Arya Samajists themselves than given above and it proves to the hilt that Swami Dayanand did not care at all for honesty or sincerity of beliefs and convictions in enlisting members for his Samaj. Bhagwan Dev Atma had in the very seventies read Arya Samaj aright and his love of truth and sincerity received the severest shocks by their merciless sacrifice at the altar of expediency.

Principal Ram Dev, B.A., late of Gurukul Kangri of Arya Samaj wrote as follows in *Prakash*, Lahore, a leading paper of the Arya Samaj, dated 13th June, 1920 :—

"I wonder why you do not raise a voice of protest against those *khanazad* (home-bred) enemies who live and move in the Samaj in spite of their disbelief in *Vedic* revelation and thus eat into its vitals like septic germs . . . People go to them thinking them to be Arya Samajists, but when they return after visiting them they

find their faith shaken. If these people were open foes, other people, (*i.e.*, unsuspecting Arya Samajists) would not fall into their trap.

"There are several such men and two among them have admitted to me that they do not believe in *Vedas* as God-revealed and even then they continue as members of the Samaj. One of them is Rai Bahadur . . . M.A., who himself told me that not only now but never before had he believed them as revelation. He even said further that he had tried to influence Rishi Dayanand to abrogate the third article of faith in Arya Samaj, which imposed such a condition so that even disbelievers in *Vedic* revelation could enter Arya Samaj, but Rishiji was not caught in the trap. The wonder is that this Mahashai has been in spite of his disbelief (in *Vedic* revelation) continuing for years as a member of the Samaj."

And this Rai Bahadur is the same first President about whom we have written above. Why should his conduct astonish anybody?

Is it not more astonishing and shocking that Dayanand himself knowing Rai Bahadur's disbelief, not only appointed him as the first President of the Arya Samaj but even the Vice-President of that All India big body, called *Paropkarni Sabha*, which he appointed by his last will to carry on his *Vedic* propaganda after his death? Is this conduct consistent with honesty? Had not then belief in *Vedic* revelation been made an article of faith merely as a matter of pure policy?

Let us quote another Arya Samaj preacher, a graduate whose evidence still further and conclusively proved the above facts. Pandit Parmanand, B.A., Arya Updeshak, wrote in the Arya paper *Prakash* of Lahore, dated 28th Asauj, Sambat 1980 Bikrini :—

"The danger which troubles me to-day has been felt as such by the best leaders of the Arya Samaj since its very start. Unfortunately since the establishment of the Arya Samaj there exists a school of thought (*Vichar Dal*) which considers and accepts Arya Samaj to be only a reforming society of Hindus and now *to add to our misfortune the members of this school are on the increase . . . It is needless for me to state that since the early days of Arya Samaj, this slogan was constantly dinned into our ears that Maharishi Dayanand himself had put in the belief in Vedic revelation in the principles of Arya Samaj simply with the object of uniting the Arya nation in one bond. This dose (ghutti) was administered with great success by Rai Mulraj, (i.e., the first President—Pub) and his companions.*" (*Italics are ours.*)

OPPOSITION BY ARYA SAMAJ.

What Bhagwan read in the activities of the Arya Samaj was nothing but truth. But it was this truth which the early Aryas and their successors never wanted to be known. Arya Samaj was and is mainly a political body. But it has always resented even the

just exposure of its life and activities. Instead of meeting the arguments and facts of Bhagwan Dev Atma several leading Arya Samajists have indulged either in *argumentum ad-Hominem* and even showed clear tendency of sometimes *argumentum ad Baculum*. These are always the weapons of the losing party. We just quote here one instance of how the start was made of writing false things against Bhagwan Dev Atma. We find in the October issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* for 1877 the following under the title of "Bawa Narain Singh, Pleader of Amritsar and *Bradar-i-Hind*" :—

"Bawa Narain Singh, Pleader, Amritsar, has contributed an article in *Vakil Hindustan*, dated the 14th September on *Vedas*. In the course of his article, the Bawa has written something about the article which appeared in the July issue of our journal under the heading "Swami Dayanand and Ved." We find nothing in this article which may be called a reasonable reply to any of our . . . objections and about which we may again try to convince him by arguments. He writes to begin with, that it is regrettable as to why we should call ourselves Agnihotri when we do not believe in *Vedas*. We enquire from our unbiased readers as to which of our arguments, is the above fact advanced as a reply. If this is his logic and such his reply, he must indeed be a very successful lawyer in winning the cases of his clients.

"Again he writes with his usual vigour that it is regrettable that we have shown a white feather like some persons in army who make an advance in all other things save when engaging in actual battle is concerned. He writes that when Swamiji was at Lahore, he invited us to a discussion on *Vedas* but we slunk away. Up to now we have not, for certain reasons, made public what took place between Swamiji and ourselves about debate on *Vedas*. But these lines of Bawa Sahib have compelled us to make a reply for his and our readers' information. We assure Bawa Sahib that we were born in U. P. and the people of that province are too well known for their valour and courage in fighting. *When Swamiji was here at Lahore, we ourselves invited Swamiji to a debate* and offered to him to appoint four judges—two from his side and two from ours --to give their verdict on our debate. *But Swami declined definitely* and did not agree to have judges. Even a man with ordinary common sense can understand the cogency of having judges in a matter where two persons—one of whom may be in the right and another in the wrong—enter into a debate on a common issue. *This fact is known to hundreds of people as all this talk of ours took place in a big congregation.*

"Besides this, we value war of pen better than oral debate. This is firstly because written debates have a lasting value and again oral debate can benefit only those few who attend it, while written debate can reach the largest public which is absent. *We had therefore invited Swamiji at first to enter with us into written debate. But he definitely declined even to do so on the plea that he had no time for that.* We ask our pleader friend to point out in all

this, where we showed a white feather. If our pleader friend only thinks awhile even now, he would realise that in the field of knowledge no other war is more efficient than the war of pen, for the latter is more effective than the oral war for the obvious reason that in writing one's hands are bound down. *Even now if our pleader friend desires to enter into this war of pen in which we are engaged, we are always ready for it.*

"Again our pleader friend writes that we do not know how *Vedas* were revealed, as if our friend himself knows all about their revelation. To show his knowledge in this respect he writes a sentence that before the actual revelation took place it was written in the preface, Ved Vyas, that every *Veda* went after that Rishi's name to whom its knowledge was revealed and that we should satisfy ourselves by a reference to Swami Dayanand's Ved Bhash. We ask our friend about this also as to whence he got the knowledge that preface by Ved Vyas was in existence before *Vedas* were revealed. His Swami writes in *Rig Ved Adi Bhash Bhumika*, number I page 20 that *Vedas* existed with *Brahma*, etc. even before Rishies Merchi etc., and Munies Biyas etc., took their birth. That is, according to our friend—the pleader, the preface (*Dibacha*), written by Biyas which existed before *Vedas* came into existence in which it is stated that the *Vedic* knowledge that has been revealed through any Rishi stands in that Rishi's name. But his Swami says that Biyas was not even born when *Vedas* were revealed. We want to know who among both of them is to be trusted more, Swami or his disciple the *Bawa*. Does our friend on the basis of such personal knowledge recommend us to read the *Veda Bhash* of Swami Dayanand Saraswati?

"In the end the *Bawa* has the courage to write one sentence within inverted commas showing that it has been written by us and then comments on it. That sentence is, "If *Vedas* are the revelation of God, why do they contain praise of God." We at once repeat the saying that no lie is blacker than the one spoken in the very presence of a man about whom it is spoken. *We invite our pleader friend to point out to us the page of any of our articles in any issue of our paper in which we have written that sentence.* If he fails to do so, as he is bound to fail, since we never wrote that sentence, we appeal to him to desist from writing such nonsense in future, specially in print, because the pleader's ways are not equally successful at all places."

This is in fact, a mere sample of the opposition, that many Arya Samajists launched against Bhagwan Dev Atma, and which assumed hideous proportions; as time went on, and to which we hope to advert in our subsequent parts, when dealing with the persecutions of Bhagwan-Dev Atma by worshippers of one God without a second.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's love of truth and goodness and hatred for all that was antagonistic to truth and goodness had made it

imperative for him to enter even single-handed into a violent conflict with the policy and love of expediency which reigned in the hearts of the majority of the earliest leaders of the Arya Samaj. This naturally raised against him the great combination of hostile forces in that growing body. Again the same highest psychic forces brought him into conflict with the members of his own society on the question of *Kuch Behar* marriage. This was a marriage which very rudely violated the cherished principles of the Brahmo Samaj and no less a leader of that Samaj than Babu Keshab Chandra Sen was involved in it. This marriage was arranged between the eldest daughter of Babu K. C. Sen who was not even of fourteen years then and had not accordingly attained the marriageable age fixed by Act III of 1872 (passed as a result of Babu K. C. Sen's own initiation and most active support) and the young Maharaja of Kuch Behar who was a minor—being only of fifteen—and was not a Brahmo. At Calcutta this news created a sensation and its public announcement “was a signal for many from amongst the general body of Brahmos, as well as the female emancipationists, the constitutionists, the five lamps men, and the secret league men to combine into a strong and compact body of protesters against the intended marriage.” [*History of Brahmo Samaj* by S. N. Shastri, Vol. I, p. 377.]

But though at Calcutta, a general body of the Brahmos united to protest against this step of Babu K. C. Sen and called the marriage a sin, at Lahore Bhagwan Dev Atma was the *only* solitary person who opposed this painful and sinful step. Writes Pandit S. N. Shastri in the second volume of his *History of Brahmo Samaj* :—

“When that controversy (Kuch Behar marriage) broke out the Samaj members (at Lahore) declared in favour of neutrality. But Pandit Agnihotri (Bhagwan Dev Atma) who strongly inclined in favour of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, gave up his membership of the Punjab Samaj, which kept to the neutral policy, and established a private prayer meeting at his own house As a consequence of the Kuch Behar marriage controversy Pandit Agnihotri started a separate organisation of his own ; but Samaj members on the other side, under the leadership of Dr. Brij Lal Ghose, braced themselves up for carrying on the ordinary work of the Samaj”

Thus in Punjab, Bhagwan Dev Atma's voice was the only voice which was absolutely and fearlessly raised against all untruth and wrong whether found in his own society or outside, and his devoted and complete love of truth and goodness left no room in his mind to give way to all those considerations which weigh with mankind—the considerations of fame, name, public opinion, happiness, peace of mind, ties of friendships, etc., etc. *He sacrificed everything at the altar of his beloved ideal of truth and goodness.*

But we shall invariably find that Bhagwan Dev Atma brought

always an open mind on any question and he weighed all sides for and against it. He would even lean on generosity when judging an opponent's position. But when after mature thought it became crystal clear to him on the basis of facts that he was in the right, he let no consideration stand in the way of his plunging wholeheartedly in the conflict in defence of truth and goodness. We quote at length *some* of the contributions of Bhagwan Dev Atma on the Kuch Behar marriage controversy from the columns of the *Bradar-i-Hind* for the year 1878 to illustrate Bhagwan Dev Atma's position :—

A.

In the March issue of that year Bhagwan wrote :—

“ During last month, the question of the marriage (of minor girl of Babu K. C. Sen with the minor boy, Maharaja of Kuch Behar) has caused such a widespread stir and agitation in papers all over India that there is no established English paper which has not taken notice of it and given one or two columns to the controversy. The Calcutta press has been simply caught up by this sensation. In the columns of *Indian Mirror*—a well-known Brahmo Samaj paper—a heated controversy and correspondence is going on for the last few days. We have very carefully gone through all these articles, letters, etc., and we are in a position now to place the important facts on this question before our readers with our own opinion.

“ Babu Keshab Chandra Sen's connection with the Brahmo Samaj is too well known to need any introduction at our hands. There is no civilised country in the world which has not heard something about his personality and work. The world has always an eye at the public life of every public man, but it is specially mindful of all public and private acts of every day life of prophets, messengers or great reformers. This is because thousands and millions of lives are closely linked with them and are considerably influenced by their example so much so that the smallest acts of their life leave good or bad impressions on their (followers') character. It is because Babu K. C. Sen is a founder of religious movement and a reformer, that several members of the Brahmo Samaj are leading a violent protest against the marriage of his daughter. The reason for this huge agitation lies in the fact that Babu K. C. Sen has arranged the marriage of his eldest daughter aged thirteen years and ten months with Maharaja of Kuch Behar who is aged about sixteen years. As the Maharaja is a minor and under the protection of British Government, the Government itself made a move in this arrangement. The Government gave the Maharaja full choice to see the girl for himself and if satisfied to enter into life long wedlock with her. It is also rumoured that the girl too has accepted Maharaja Sahib of her own free choice. The *Indian Mirror* writes that Maharaja Sahib's estate yields an annual income of eleven lacs and he himself is not only high born but good-



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA

natured, very intelligent and a capable prince and has received good English education. Above all he is a believer in the Brahma Dharm. All these considerations incline the editor of the *Indian Mirror* to a conviction that the proposed marriage is not only very highly commendable and laudable but pregnant with most beneficial results in the promotion of the cause of the Brahmo Samaj. It is well known that no religious movement comes into full fruition unless it is taken up by rajas or great influential lords. Hence the admission of the Maharaja of Kuch Behar in to the Brahmo Samaj is a matter of pride for the Brahmos.

"It was most likely that this marriage would have been delayed for some time. But as the Government intends sending Maharaja Sahib to England for higher education; and as it is proposed to have marriage celebrated before Maharaja Sahib sails for England, the Government has suggested to Babu K. C. Sen to have the ceremonies performed within this month. Babu K. C. Sen has given his assent. From the time that the news about the marriage have become public, a sensation has been created in the body of the Brahmo Samaj. One section in the Samaj disapproves of this proposed marriage. Nay, they condemn it as a sinful step. They also consider such an example set by Babu K. C. Sen as highly detrimental to the interests of the Samaj. It is this section which has engineered a violent opposition against Babu K. C. Sen. This section at first drafted a letter of protest and sent it to Babu K. C. Sen, signed by twenty-three Brahmos. In this letter they expressed their strong disapproval of the proposed marriage of his daughter with the Maharaja of Kuch Behar, firstly, because both the girl and the bridegroom are minors and hence it is a child marriage; secondly, as a child marriage it is a sin; thirdly, because it was due to the efforts of Babu K. C. Sen himself that Act III of 1872 was passed to abolish child marriage and in the Act it is laid down that marriage of a girl under fourteen and of a boy under eighteen is a child marriage. Hence a man who is himself the founder of such an Act be the first to abide by it and it is wrong on his part not to comply with it; fourthly, when Babu K. C. Sen himself would celebrate the marriage of his minor girl, many a person would imitate his example and thus consider child marriage as proper; fifthly, the Maharaja Sahib comes of a family which has been following an immemorial custom of polygamy and though he has received English education, it is not impossible that he may imitate his ancestors and thus contract another marriage during the life-time of his first wife.

"It appears that Babu K. C. Sen paid no attention to this letter of protest. After this it has been published in various papers. In order to create public opinion against this step the oppositionists sent copies of this letter to the Brahmo Samajes in India and invited their opinion on the matter. It is understood that most of the Samajes have agreed with the protesters. With all these opinions of several Samajes in their possession, they wanted to hold a protest meeting in the Albert Hall. Having failed there, on

account of several reasons, they held on 28th February, 1878 a big meeting in the Town Hall. In this meeting they at last passed two resolutions with great enthusiasm. In the first resolution they said that they viewed such a marriage as opposed to the high principles of the Samaj and though the meeting had nothing to do with the private acts of Babu K. C. Sen, this marriage (which could not be viewed as a private matter—*author*) was calculated to materially prejudice the cause of the Brahmo Samaj. Even as the Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj, Babu K. C. Sen has paid no attention to the public opinion of the Brahmos. The Brahmos have therefore lost faith in him. The second resolution was proposed by Pandit S. N. Shastari, M.A. By this a committee of some persons was appointed to take such measures as they considered necessary, in the present crisis to conserve the best interests of the Samaj and to keep its working duly regular and intact."

"This is all that we have said about the party opposing the marriage. There is also a party which is in its favour. Some leading members of Adi Brahmo Samaj have lent their support to this party. These persons convened a meeting in the Albert Hall. They sent a letter signed by 250 persons congratulating Babu K. C. Sen on this step and describing the most blessed results which would ensue from the marriage. Besides this several letters for and against have appeared and are appearing in several papers. Those who are in favour of this marriage say that firstly Babu K. C. Sen has been the author of Civil Marriage Act III of 1872 for the good of the public and it is not incumbent on him to necessarily subject himself to its provisions specially when Maharaja Kuch Behar was probably not bound by the Act and some political and moral considerations compelled the Government to have the marriage ceremony performed before Maharaja Sahib started for England. Secondly, though the bride and the bridegroom have not attained the age required by the Act, yet physically they are matured enough to get the marriage solemnised. Thirdly, Maharaja Sahib is now under the protection of the English Government. After his return, he will have the good fortune to associate with a Mahatma like Babu K. C. Sen. Hence it is improbable that he will ever have another polygamous marriage. It is hardly a sound reason to say that because the ancestors of any one have been given to a vice therefore he too would as an inevitable consequence commit that vice. If this is counted as a sound reason, then those persons in the opposite camp whose ancestors were polygamous should themselves have also married more than one wife. But now they consider polygamy an evil and wrong because of the light of education. This same light can influence the Maharaja also to be monogamous."

"Babu K. C. Sen has not come out with any written statement of his own case and in absence of facts of *both* parties being before us we cannot decide who is in the right and who in the wrong. We however endorse the view of Hindu Patriot that Babu K. C. Sen being a founder and leader of the progressive body of the Brahmo

Samaj knows his own responsibilities and the dignity of his position, and if such a man takes any step, he must have some grave reasons for it. He perhaps understands that by this marriage and specially when the daughter of such a Mahatma as Babu K. C. Sen becomes a Maharani, the Brahmo Samaj in general and the state in particular would be amply benefited."

"However after *viewing both sides* as they at present stand *we are compelled by the dictates of truth to say that so far the ages of the marrying couple are concerned the marriage is not desirable* specially when Babu K. C. Sen himself has often been impressing upon the workers of Brahmo Samaj that they should in no case countenance the marriages of girls under the age of fourteen and boys under eighteen. *Hence we extend our sympathies to all those Brahmos who have protested against this marriage.* There is a section in the Brahmo Samaj which does not view such an opposition as good. But at times such opposition is wholesome, as not only does it strengthen and purify the body but it raises its status as well..... The Brahmo Samaj on principle considers the blind and credulous following of any leader to be wrong, and in practice too it gives its members no discouragement in protesting against the actions of any great personality in the Samaj if they think those actions wrong.....Hence those who have raised a voice of protest against this marriage have our full sympathy and support though these objectionists sometimes use immoderate language and run to excesses which they should not."

"As the agitation on this question has not ceased and no statement of Babu K. C. Sen is yet published, we leave this question where it is and mean to advert to it in our some subsequent issue."

B

As stated above the protestors at Calcutta had sent a circular letter to several provincial Samajes stating the reasons of their protest and inviting their opinion. "Within a few days" says Pt. S. N. Shastri, M. A., in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, "letters of protest poured in from individual Brahmos and principal Samajes. I cannot stop to give here the purport of the letters; suffice it to say that out of 80 Samajes in Bengal as many as 50 expressed their disapprobation; three only were in favour of the marriage; four expressed no decided opinion; and the rest remained silent."

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma in Part I of his *Unique Renunciations* (p. 169):—

"They, (i.e., Calcutta protestors) sent printed circular letters about the whole affair to many Brahmo Samajes inviting their opinions about it and one such letter was also received by the Lahore Brahmo Samaj. But several blind and credulous Brahmos accepting Babu K. C. Sen as a prophet of God, did not like to raise

any voice of protest against the marriage. I pressed the matter on to them and told them that as the followers of *Dharma* it was our bounden duty to support truth and that we should not disappoint those who have sought our co-operation in their war in defence of truth. With extreme difficulty a general meeting of the members (of Lahore Brahmo Samaj) was convened. The matter was thoroughly thrashed in the meeting. Though the followers of Babu K. C. Sen did not like that any resolution should be put forward and passed, yet against their such wishes the following resolution was at last passed in this meeting by majority of votes :—

“ That this meeting has learnt with concern that the marriage of Babu K. C. Sen’s daughter is not going to be celebrated according to the Act III of 1872 and is open to other objections and that Mr. Sen, being the recognised leader of the Brahmo Samaj of India should have taken this step, which is calculated to cast a gloom over the rising church of the Brahmo Samaj. This meeting, after mature deliberation and on the strength of the letters received from Calcutta Brahmos, puts on record with regret that the proposed marriage, if it actually takes place, will not have the concurrence of the Brahmos.”

Though this resolution was passed and despatched in February, yet it was not entered in the proceedings book for several months due to the tactics of some workers in the Brahmo Samaj. When Bhagwan Dev Atma ultimately came to know of this, it came to him as a shocking surprise that some Brahmo workers could be guilty of this dark and underhand policy.

C

In the April issue of the *Bradar-i-Hind*, Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote another article which we quote here *in extenso* for the edification of our readers as it is not only an important piece of history but a very significant writing suggestive of Bhagwan Dev Atma’s position in this controversy. Bhagwan wrote :—

“ In the last issue of our journal, we have described merely those events which took place before this marriage was celebrated. We are in a position now to publish some events which took place at the time of marriage and close this matter here for the present with our final comments.”

“ All proceedings in connection with the marriage took such bewildering turns that it is a most difficult job to correctly describe them in detail and form an accurate estimate of them. But looking to the mass of writings that we have already read and that are now on our table for and against the marriage, we are at least in a position to assert that the opposition of the protesters is not *without fair and just basis*. And when, leaving aside this marriage, we look at the past history of the Brahmo Samaj and compare the present state with what is in store for us as the inevitable results

that are to follow, we consider the present protest by the objectionists as calculated to strengthen the principles of the Brahmo Samaj and to raise its prestige and grandeur....."

"We therefore do not consider that this controversy is to end only with passing final opinions on the propriety or otherwise of the objections raised for or against the marriage, but that this controversy, having raised issues (of first importance) it was bound to bring about a conflict and hence it is a providential occurrence."

"This marriage was celebrated with great magnificence and in full swing of enthusiasm in Kuch Behar on 6th of March, 1878. Before the marriage was celebrated the protesters raised objections against it only on the score of its being a child marriage. But when the marriage was celebrated they found several things connected with the rites and ceremonies which savoured of idolatry. They placed therefore the following charges against it. *Firstly*, the marriage was not performed exactly according to the Brahmo rites. *Secondly*, in the place where the ceremony took place, several things such as *Har*, *Gouri* and *Khat*, etc., which are associated with idolatrous rites, were placed. *Thirdly*, "*Homa*" ceremony was also performed. *Fourthly*, the bride was made to pass through *praschita* purification. *Fifthly*, dance by dancing girls did take place and customary filthy songs were also sung. *Sixthly*, as Keshab Chandra Sen had crossed black waters, he was considered by the other side as unclean and thus the gift of the daughter was made by his brother and not by him. Though the objection of the Raja's party was foolish yet as Babu K. C. Sen gave in, it is clear that he unconsciously acted against the principles of his Samaj. How far these objections were right, we had no facts up to now before us from the other side to judge correctly. But to-day we have got a supplement to *Dharamtatwa* (an organ of Babu K. C. Sen). We have read it and we have come to know what the other side has to say. This supplement has been published by two gentlemen, Babu Partab Chandra Mozumdar and Gour Govind Roy, Assistant Secretary, of Brahmo Samaj of India and Secretary of Brahmo Missionary Conference respectively. The writers say that they have published facts which they have gathered after due enquiry and have done so with the sanction and under the direction of Babu K. C. Sen. After giving details in full about the marriage, the writers have arrived at the conclusion that (1) neither can this marriage be called a child marriage, (2) nor any kind of idolatry has been practised in its performance. In defence of the marriage not being early, they have advanced the arguments mentioned by us in our last issue that the marriage ceremony was merely a formal matter and it was more of the nature of betrothal than real marriage as according to the wishes of the Government the Maharaja Sahib left for England immediately after the rites and ceremonies were over. Again the Act III of 1872 which was passed at the instance of Keshab Babu, did not apply to the Maharaja and if the marriage had come under that Act then of

course the age limits of bride and bridegroom would have been applicable. The writers could not deny that idols were placed there while marriage was being performed, but they say that the bride did not at all perform any idolatrous rites. They deny that any *praschittya* ceremony was performed so far bride was concerned. All that they acknowledge to have been done was that a gold *mohar* was brought by the Maharaja's grandmother, with which she touched the bride's hand and then laid it on the ground. About the bridegroom it may be said that he himself has no faith in idolatry, and he had to be present at the ceremony of *Homa* merely at the instance of the Government. If, however, his priests have indulged in idolatrous practices, surely the Maharaja cannot be held responsible for them."

"Our readers can for themselves decide how far these arguments have any soundness about them. We however on our part consider them as lame excuses. Besides this the writers themselves admit that it was not the object of Babu K. C. Sen to justify all the circumstances that have transpired in connection with the marriage of his daughter or completely to vindicate his own conduct in this matter. There are certain things in relation to the marriage, which, if they have pained anybody, have pained him much more than others. The marriage has not been entirely in accordance with his own wishes and he has never made a secret of his dissatisfaction on this point."

This is all right. But when we read along with the above the following few lines, we feel great astonishment:—

"According to the will and commandments of his God, he has indeed given his daughter in marriage to a royal house."

"We confidently say that we are neither enamoured of this kind of revelation, nor do we find any trace of such imaginary revelation in the principles of Brahmo Samaj. In our opinion Keshab Babu has acted under a great delusion in this respect. Those who support this marriage, the performance of which is wholly against the principles of Brahmo Samaj, merely on the score that it is ordained by God's revelation, expose themselves to still greater blame. The sooner such people awaken to the shallowness of their position and superstitious belief, the better it is for them and the welfare of the Samaj."

This was Bhagwan Dev Atmas position in relation to the wrong step into which Babu K. C. Sen was lured by circumstances. At Calcutta there was a section of progressive Brahmos who opposed this step of their leader but in the whole of the Punjab, Bhagwan Dev Atma stood all alone in his protest. To him all that mattered was truth and hence he took no stock of what the world would say but launched into a war in its defence at all costs.

D

In the May issue of *Bradar-i-Hind* we read another instance of a very enthusiastic Brahmo succumbing to the monster of

orthodox and idolatrous rites on his own marriage. Brahmo Samaj was distinguished for its avowed hostility to idolatry and its members not only professed abhorrence for idolatry but preached against it. But when the time of putting their profession into practice came some backslided. To a lover of truth like Bhagwan Dev Atma it not only came as a bewildering surprise but as a painful and bitter experience of human souls. As soon as Bhagwan Dev Atma came to know of the lapse made by one of the earnest Brahmos, he raised a voice of protest at once in his own paper. Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote :—

“On Tuesday, 30th of April, 1878, marriage of Lala Kashi Ram—an earnest and active young Brahmo—was celebrated at Amritsar. A very respectable and trustworthy friend of ours has informed us orally that Lala Kashi Ram, like his other Punjabee fellows has permitted those prevalent idolatrous and harmful rites to be observed and those superstitious customs to be followed, which it is the prime object of Brahmo Samaj to root out. To tell the truth when we have to write of such events in which truth is ruthlessly sacrificed, we receive indescribable pain and anguish of heart. We consider such examples set by our own members as most inauspicious and ominous for the cause of our Samaj. Outsiders consider Punjabees to be a brave race but said it is that we find no trace of moral heroism in them in the pursuit of any right principle. Those who boast of having God as their refuge and yet at the hour of trial abandon that refuge and run to the shelter of the world are either not honest in their faith or are absolutely ignorant of the true attributes of God and His Omnipotence who is the source of truth and true protector of the lovers of truth. We see several sects and Samajes in the Punjab. But we would reckon them all as shallow and insignificant so long their members do not practise the noble principles they preach. We consider illiteracy thousand times better than knowledge which is divorced from conduct. May our countrymen awaken even at this stage and realise the gravity and extreme importance of the facts of religion and truth and the true principles of higher life and mould their daily life after them.”

UNTRUTH AND EVIL IN ARYA SAMAJ AND BRAHMO SAMAJ.

Hatred against collous indifference to evil and falsehood or the true motives of Bhagwan's agitation against Arya and Brahmo Samajes, etc.

We have, before this, dealt with Bhagwan Dev Atma's emphatic protest against certain practices found both in the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj. We asserted that Bhagwan's love of truth and goodness led him on to count no sacrifice too great in putting down the voice of untruth and wrong wherever found and it was this imperious love which brought him into mortal grips with heavy odds. It would however be far more interesting and authoritative to quote at this stage two very informing and elevating articles which Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote on “Indifference” in *Bradar-i-Hind*

in its issues for August and September 1881 in which he told his readers in plainest possible terms why he thought it a duty on him to agitate against certain things in the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj. Bhagwan wrote :—

I

“ Besides hundreds of other evils which creep into the body of degraded nations, the one that we count among the most disastrous is the attitude of ‘indifference.’ We regard this evil as the most dreadful. This evil force finds a dominant place or secures sovereign rule specially in a nation whose hearts are ruled by absolute selfishness and are disabled by the clouds of ignorance (or soul-darkness) from seeing the beauty of moral life. In the legislature of this kingdom of indifference only such statutes are passed which aim at laying an axe at the root of that higher force which is called true sympathy in various relations. The ultimate aim of this evil is to cut off man from man. The supreme object of this evil is to make man wholly self-centred. With the spread of this evil all the natural relations break down. The considerations of good and evil in social organism lose their hold on the minds of individuals and all activities of such people are motivated by exclusive personal gain or personal loss.”

“ Our nation presents a living illustration of the sovereign rule of this evil. The individuals forming our nation are in general deeply absorbed in their own selfish affairs.....Just talk to a man about the sad condition of his own brother and he would forthwith say, ‘why should I concern myself with another man’s affairs; everyone will reap as he sows.’ Ask an educated man to agitate for Civil Service Examination in India. He would forthwith reply, ‘My good Sir! why should I trouble myself. Have I to become a Deputy Commissioner?’ Leave politic aside. Let us look to our social body. We find it riddled at thousands of places by the missiles of evil social customs. If A has no daughter to get married and his poverty-stricken brother has a grown up daughter to dispose of but whom he is not able to get married because of the heavy expenditure which the prevalent social custom demands on marriages; Mr. A would not care a bit to agitate against such a social tyranny even to help his own brother. So far so that if we have in our very house a young widow who is acutely feeling her forlorn state, and whose remarriage we believe to be our duty, we manifest callous indifference to her lamentable state, and our springs of sympathy even in her relation get dried up, because owing to utter selfishness the only motives that rule us are about our own fancied good or evil. We are afraid only of incurring the displeasure of our castemen in case we help the wretched widow. This nightmare of the wrath of our castemen paralyses our mind to such an extent that it becomes impossible for us even to think of the miseries of that poor widow. Thus owing to the motives of personal consideration of being in good books of the world, we become indifferent and pass our days in peace, though the atmosphere is rent by the cries and lamentations of the oppressed widow.

"But this indifference produces most terrible and harmful results when it is manifested in the world of moral life. It should be the bounden duty of all the leaders of such religious societies which have for their object the moral amelioration of our countrymen to see that this canker does not eat their heart or the hearts of those placed under their guidance. We say it with certainty that the Punjab Central Brahmo Samaj (founded by Bhagwan Dev Atma—*Ed.*) would never have come into existence if the original Brahmo Samaj of the Punjab had considered this evil in its true perspective. On the contrary one of the written articles of faith of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj countenances this dreadful indifference about the good or evil of others. It is a matter of supreme indifference to them whether the various Brahmo Samajes in India flourish or decay. They feel unconcerned if howsoever absurd practices creep into the Samaj. They stand unaffected even if wrong and absurd principles are published in the name of Brahm Dharman. We fail to understand for what earthly object is their society established when it is utterly oblivious even to the good of the Brahm Dharma or Brahmo Samaj? Those who countenance this indifference and knowingly manifest it in relation to moral life, do degrade themselves gradually by such behaviour. Suppose a man were to declare publicly in our very presence that '*Hom*' is in accordance with Brahmo principles when in fact it is not, and that the members of Brahmo Samaj consider '*Hom*' as one of the most cardinal elements in soul-purification and that they uphold caste system, and suppose that the person making these assertions is a big man enjoying high social distinction and those whom he is addressing are all wealthy Hindus for whom we generally have great esteem, what should be our attitude if no other member of the Brahmo Samaj except us is present there? Should our attitude be of one who decides to remain silent because he is afraid of incurring the odium of the assembly by causing disturbance in it or of earning disapprobation of that highly placed speaker by opposing him or should it be of one who finds consolation of heart in the fact that (so far as he is concerned) he himself does not believe in what has been said by that speaker? What would be the effect of this indifference? This would on the one hand fling many of those present in the audience deeper into the mire of false ideas and on the other would weaken our own moral courage. Though (by such an attitude) we have not actively helped a wrong yet we have all the same deliberately connived at it and thus (by our indifference) helped forward what was opposed to truth and are undoubtedly responsible for it. Sheikh Saadi has rightly said that if a man sees a well and a blind man going towards it and keeps silent, he becomes a sinner. *The man who does not on all occasions and under all circumstances stand for what is right or what is truth can never be called a true friend of truth.* Such a person is like that selfish worldly wise man who always keeps his self supreme and is prepared to stand by truth only to the extent it demands no sacrifice of his selfish interests, and does not invoke on his head public displeasure. Like a fallen woman he desires to please all and considers all talk about his spiritual

evolution or degradation as a prattle of children. May God preserve Brahmo Samaj from the hands of such persons and may He make it the true friend of truth on all occasions.

II

“ To defend and practise truth and to avoid and oppose untruth is obligatory on every human being irrespective of caste, creed, colour and country. The decline of our land for centuries has made our people oblivious to this great truth. However contact with the Britishers has begun to improve to some extent this sad state of affairs. Still on deep consideration, it would not be improper to say that in the last half a century of British connection we have as yet made only a beginning.

“In order to defend and follow truth there are three essential stages :—

Firstly—BELIEF that the real good of man lies in accepting and following what is true, or what is truly good or what is a fact.

Secondly—When our reason accepts the glory of truth, it becomes obligatory on us to declare it as such whether that truth pertains to matters religious, social, political or scientific.

Thirdly—When after mental belief our heart too realises the beauty and sublimity of truth and develops love for it, it becomes incumbent upon us not only to make a declaration of it but to follow it in our every day life, i.e., practise what we believe and preach.

“If we compare the present day condition of our people with the above three essential stages of truth, we shall at once find that not to say of the latter two points even the first element has not taken root in the hearts of our people. Out of the population of 24 crores in our land, we do not come across even one per cent who have full faith in the first point that in truth lies our highest welfare. Leave aside those great masses of illiterate people who have perhaps not even heard of this first point what is the condition of those who style themselves as educated or cultured ? Even they do not realise the above truth ? Had this very limited circle developed a faith that in the acceptance of truth lies their great good, we would have felt some satisfaction and cast off the clouds of deep despondency. *The education imparted in our schools and colleges is very detrimental as regards the training of morals or cultivation of character.* When we study the lives of thousands of young men turned out as educated from various schools and colleges, we find that many of these literate and cultured friends do not know even the definition of truth and are unaware of what relation truth bears to our life. Majority of them seem innocent even of the phraseology of spiritual good or national welfare. Within the walls of the educational seminaries, all that they cook up are few text-books prescribed for their examination beyond which they seem to know nothing. And when after completing their education, they enter life, they are absolutely caught up by the considerations of bodily

maintenance and sensual comforts and manifest strange indifference to all other duties of life ”

VOICE AGAINST ARYA SAMAJ.

“ When we turn our attention from all other parts of our country and confine it for a while to our own part (i.e., Northern India), we clearly find that even those very few so-called religious societies too which have of late been established in this part of the country betray the same poverty of belief even in the first essentials of truth. The Arya Samajes which have been set up in various places show very great fervour to political reform. But it is regrettable their earnestness and fervour are not based on solid foundation . . . that *the members of the Arya Samaj generally do not seem to believe that in the acceptance and practice of truth and truth alone lies the best welfare of man.* We are ourselves familiar with the lives of many members of the Arya Samaj who occupy the leading position in their society. These leading members have not only no faith in Vedic revelation but have no faith even in the existence of God Himself. So far even morality is concerned they do not pin their faith on its immutable principles. In their opinion it is not necessary always and under all circumstances to speak the truth. *They believe that it is highly beneficial to their interests to sometimes abstains from it.* We do not say that all members of the Arya Samaj are of this type. There are many who of course honestly believe in its principles. What we complain about is that though many members of the Arya Samaj know definitely like ourselves that many a leading member of their Samaj has no faith in the Samaj principles as stated above yet they are knowingly keeping silent about them in violation of all honesty and good conscience. Nay, they connive at all that. This clearly proves that not only those persons who in spite of their want of belief in the Samaj principles continue to call themselves its members, are dead souls so far as their belief in the truth is concerned, but even those persons who countenance these frauds seem also to have no faith that in truth lies our highest welfare. Have we not so often exposed their falsehoods in our articles? Have we not exploded many of their errors on the authority of their own writings? We have many times one so. Nay, we have exposed the untruths of their founder, Swami Dayanand himself. But we find none of them accepting truth and defending it against untruth ”

VOICE AGAINST BRAHMO SAMAJ.

“ Let us now turn to Brahmo Samaj. We are in a position to assert that so far as belief in the principles of the Brahmo Samaj is concerned, all its members are honest. There is none in the Brahmo Samaj who is not sincere in his faith in the doctrines of his society. But ordinarily their conscience is all the same very weak. Though they believe in the triumph of truth yet they betray great weakness so far as declaring and following the truth is concerned. Though as regards their belief they are called members of the

Brahmo Samaj yet their soul condition is not better than that of the majority of our other countrymen Leaving a few exceptions we find that in the generality of the Brahmo Samaj members, we miss that moral courage which could enable them to stand by truth or even to declare it before the public. It is due to their woeful lack of interest or indifference that they stand unconcerned and merely behold as spectators all those activities of Babu K. C. Sen and his few followers who have been corrupting the purity of the Brahm Dharm and knowingly or unknowingly laying an axe at the root of that flourishing state of Brahmo Samaj which has taken half a century to achieve the present fruitful state. All that does not smite their heart. Suppose our dear little ones are asleep and a poisonous reptile is creeping steadily but surely towards them in order to sting them, what would the sensible world think of our behaviour if we stand indifferent and move not a little finger to save them? Our Brahmo friends are in truth maintaining the 'Devil may care' attitude. For the last three years Sadharan Brahmo Samaj has been labouring hard to save their society from various absurd and false beliefs and practices, and though there are scores of the mofussil Brahmo Samajes which have come to realise the hollowness of those absurd practices, yet they have not courage enough to make even a mere protest against them. Does not this betray a very weak and enfeebled state of soul? Is not such an indifference most deplorable? This state of indifference or insensitiveness is opposed to all the duties or obligations which morality imposes on us. Hence this indifference is positively a sin. Our hearts cannot remain unaffected in the matters of morality. All our inclinations depend upon our heart forces If a constable has unduly beaten a poor man in our presence and the aggrieved party has filed a complaint against that cruel constable, we try our level best to avoid going to court to give evidence. Even when cited and summoned, we try to escape by saying that we know nothing. We thus try to maintain an attitude of 'no concern' even in such matters. But our heart is moulded all the same for good or for evil. Because we choose to remain unmoved that does not mean that our hearts are not affected. Is it not true that the constable had oppressed another? If, instead of helping the poor man and the cause of justice, we try to stand aside, do we not by that very behaviour murder justice?"

All the civilised nations consider this kind of indifference very harmful. This want of courage to stand by the truth which Bhagwan deplored so pathetically and forcibly at that time is visible even to-day in the largest majority of our educated people. So far as Arya Samaj is concerned there is an increasing number of people in the society which according to the admissions of their own writers, does not believe in the principles of Arya Samaj and yet continue to be its members. Can men of this type be credited with belief that truth alone leads to our true welfare?

VII

UNIQUE LIFE MISSION.

The evolution of various highest psychic forces of love of truth and goodness and hatred for untruth and wrong gave Bhagwan's soul an absolutely new and distinct type. The drama that these powers began to play in the world came as an altogether new experience to those around. There was no untruth and no wrong which he believed as such and which he did not vehemently expose, irrespective of all considerations; and there was no cause of truth and goodness which he believed as such and which he did not fearlessly champion. He never in the least cared for popular favour, or frown, praise or blame or any kind of persecution. All his time, besides the few hours of service, he devoted exclusively and single-mindedly to worship, study, contemplation, writing, holding meetings in order to deliver sermons or public lectures for the good of others, doing various activities for the welfare of his own society or other *sabhas* (societies), etc. All these various activities in the service of the cause of truth and goodness in their turn made his highest psychic forces stronger and mightier, so much so that they began to grow imperious in their demands and were not content to let Bhagwan devote even few hours to service in the school. They demanded his all time and attention for their service. They thus became jealous even of the few hours he spent in Government service though even those few hours were spent in the welfare of others.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma in his most inspiring booklet *Atma Katha*:—

“At the age of about twenty-three years, I came to Lahore. Here besides the hours of teaching in school, I devoted all the rest of my time to study, contemplation, writing, delivering sermons or lectures and in doing various other acts for the welfare of others. I had no social connection with others however highly placed they were, save with very a few select men. Even in this limited circle of my acquaintances, I was not very intimate with more than one or two very good souls. The reason was that temperamentally I was quite different from them. I was not a bird of the same feather with them. Hence intimacy could not grow amongst us. The temporary connection which was formed with some had also to be given up after some time for one or other reason.

“I had at that time strongest faith in the imaginary being called God. I believed Him to be an embodiment of truth, goodness and beauty, and worshipped him as such. As I had in my own soul evolved various forces of love of truth and goodness, I naturally grew to be the most devoted lover or true *bhagata* (devotee) of such a being.”

"Though, owing to the evolution in me of various forces of *parhit* (highest good of others), I passed all my waking time besides the few hours of school service, in the cause of welfare and well-being of others, I began to feel an urge now and then (due to this imperious love of good of others) that I should break off all these bonds of Government service and devote myself wholesale to the highest good of others."

"It was perhaps on some day in the year 1879 or 1880 that I was reading in my house an account of the philanthropic work of Miss Mary Carpenter. She was an English lady. In those days juvenile offenders were herded in jails with confirmed and hardened criminals and their association with these hardened rogues naturally contaminated and spoiled the whole life of these young offenders. Hundreds of thousands of persons in England saw all this, but they never realised the horror of this practice, because they possessed no higher sense or consciousness which could make them see and realise this evil. The noble heart of Miss Carpenter felt this evil as horrible and it urged her on to rise and make an effort to remove it. She took up the work in right earnest. After years of continuous struggles she succeeded. The Government agreed to accept her demand. The juvenile criminals ceased to be herded with old hardened offenders, and arrangements were made to keep them separate in order to save them from being soiled in morals by their (hardened criminals) evil influences."

"After attaining success in England she directed her energies towards similar reformation in the jails of India too. She came here several times with the same object. After long struggles her efforts were crowned with success here also. It is said that when Raja Ram Mohan Roy had gone to England and was a guest in the house of her father, she was quite a young girl. Her noble heart was so powerfully drawn to this great man that she fully decided to unite herself with him in sacred wedlock. But when she came to know that not only was the Raja married but that his wife was alive, she had to give up the idea of marriage with him. She however determined to remain all her life a celibate and made a resolve that if she was not able to marry this great man and thus serve him, she would, as the next best, serve the land of his birth as she could. With this noble resolve she came to India several times. She also formed in England a society under the name of 'National Indian Association' with the sole object of propagating education among Indian women and bringing about better social relations and nearness among Indians and Europeans. This society has been in existence since then. In India too it has several branches, and the Association is doing some useful work every year."

"This story as regards her relation with Raja Ram Mohan Roy may or may not be true, but so far as its second part is concerned that Miss Carpenter, moved by the true higher feeling of public good, worked for many years in order to bring about the much needed

jail reform and that she established the above named Association it is absolutely correct.

“On reading her life story, when the beautiful picture of the feeling of her unselfish service of others and that too in relation to my land, came vividly before my mind’s eye, my heart was at once powerfully moved. My own higher feeling in this respect was so deeply roused that I burst spontaneously into tears and cried loud to myself :—Ah ! A foreigner’s heart should realise the horror of an evil in my land to such an extent as to make it cross thousands of miles and come over here several times to struggle for the removal of that evil, while Indians themselves should become degraded and degenerated to such an extent as to show callous indifference even to their own good or evil of various kinds !! Oh ! What a heart-breaking sight !!

“This sight affected my heart deeply. My love for good of others grew stronger. The feeling of dedicating my all for the best service of my countrymen grew deeper.

“In the end of the year 1880, a great calamity befell me. I lost her who was my most devoted friend, my one faithful companion in the path of higher life, my ever constant sharer in weal and woe, *i.e.*, my own beloved wife. What a tremendous loss ! What a most painful and disheartening catastrophe it was for a lonely and unique traveller (on the path of higher life) like myself to have lost the one and the only true fellow-traveller, the one true comforter, the one great inspirer and a loyal friend !!! This irreparable loss filled my heart with great sorrow for some time. But gradually and steadily this shock abated. In 1881 I took a year’s leave and lived outside Lahore for eight or nine months. It was in the November of 1881 that I married a *second time. After that I resumed charge of my school studies.

“In the beginning of the year 1882 my forces of love of truth and goodness again began to urge me to give up my all for the single-minded service of their cause. Favourable circumstances cropped up which strengthened this urge. This year the books that I read contained the life of Mahatma Buddha. It strengthened still more my above longing and a struggle arose in my heart. I saw, on the one hand, the most degraded, superstition-ridden, sinful and most deplorable moral and spiritual condition of people around me which appealed to my powerful feeling of doing good to others in mute but most eloquent language, and urged me that I was not intended to remain a schoolmaster but was destined for some far higher ideal ; and on the other several other considerations cropped up in my mind. They were as under :—

*This time Bhagwan married a young Bangalee widow who, though a Brahman, did not belong to any of those sub-castes in which Bhagwan’s family people could marry. Thus by this marriage he set an example in his own life, not only of widow remarriage but that of an inter-caste and inter-provincial marriage too.

(1) I was drawing Rs. 150 per mensem. Besides others, I had a wife and three children who depended solely on me for their maintenance and bringing up. What would become of them if I gave up my present job ?

(2) The feeling of my self-respect repeatedly warned me that it was impossible for me to make an appeal for monetary help to others for my own self or for my family.

(3) How was it possible for man in general even to cherish a feeling of reverence for me when my ideal was absolutely different from the ideal of those lacs of the so-called *sadhus* who roamed at large in this great sub-continent, when my spiritual life and my daily programme of it had nothing in common with them, when I did not believe like them in the breaking off of all relationships and throwing away the responsibilities connected with them, and did not consider such an action as religious, when I believed in none of their *Shastras*, when I did not at all desire to lead life as they did and follow the programme of work that they followed ? Who would care for me under such circumstances ?

(4) My religious path was new, my renunciations were uncommon, my ideal was unique, my work was of novel kind. With all this uniqueness or newness about me, how could it be possible for me to expect any help or even good treatment at the hands of my countrymen who would on the contrary hate me ? My uncommon courses of conduct had already created a host of enemies for me. Leaving other thiests, even several God-worshippers of my own Samaj (Brahmo Samaj) had grown hostile to me.

"But all these latter considerations had little weight with me in comparison to the former higher urge which I felt within me, because the evolution of the forces of love of truth and goodness in me had made it impossible for any lower feeling to cause impediment in their onward course, though one or other of these lower feelings had no doubt placed a hurdle in their way. What then was the real reason for such a conflict ? I had not till then been able to decide that the urge that I felt within me to dedicate my all to the service of truth and goodness was necessarily a command from my God whose earnest devotee I was and whose will, therefore, I was bound to obey. Besides this there stood before me two other obstacles. The one was that I had none to confide my struggles to, as I saw none able enough to throw any light in the way of my mental struggles.....The other was that though I had full faith in God's grace, I was not sure that beside manifesting mercy to all beings alike, He showed any special favour to any one. I had not till then come to believe in the 'special providence.' Hence all this kept me in the vortex of my inner struggles. A heavy storm was shaking my heart. I felt helpless as to whom I should go for light and how I should come to definite decision and thus gain peace and quietude of mind ?

"At last during these days another wonderful event happened. I had with me a Bengalee tract which contained the talks of some God-worshippers in question and answer form on religious topics. I felt an impulse to read that book. I opened the book and began to read it. I found some questions and answers in it dealing with the problem of special providence. The perusal of those lines at that time had a magical influence upon me. On the one hand, it created in me faith in special providence, and on the other it also shed light on the question as to how could I ascertain that my impulse or higher urge was necessarily from my God. It was stated therein that any urge which is from God does not cease after appearing once or twice but it persists.

"There was a huge fallacy involved in the outer form of both these matters though their inner sense was all right. God is merely a myth. Hence any urge from Him—a mythical being—is on the face of it absurd. But this much is true that when any feeling is present in the heart of any man or animal, it produces an urge or impulse to action. If the feeling is sufficiently strong and is not repressed by any other feeling, it not only once or twice but repeatedly urges a man to action. Again there is no higher or evolutionary feeling which is not reinforced in its efforts in the march of higher evolution by that group of higher cosmic processes which originate it and which are always at the back of its evolution provided it is present in a human soul in a sufficiently predominant form and in the service of which he is prepared to make all kinds of necessary renunciations and sacrifices with a view to remain true to it. In my own life this great fact or law has been fully vindicated. I did not know these truths about man and universe, at that time but I was in fact an evolutionist in spirit. Hence when I believed even in the mythical God, I did receive help from the evolutionary forces of Nature.

"I was now in a position to settle once for all about my inner struggles. I was already a master of my lower desire forces. And when I saw that the urge that I felt was from God, and that He wished me, the lover of truth and goodness as I was, that I should lay all my powers at His feet for the destruction of the reign of untruth and wrong and for the establishment of the reign of truth and goodness, and that when He, the embodiment of truth, goodness and beauty, was prepared to favour me with his special providence in my most difficult path and protect me in every way and promote my cause, why should I hesitate and not surrender myself in all humility to his great will? The awakening of this resolve prepared me fully for this sacrifice. All my indecision and hesitancy vanished. I formed a stern determination, that come what may, I must accept this unique life-vow and budge not an inch therefrom. I confided my this resolve to my wife. She saw the great difficulties that such a step would necessarily involve. But she did not offer any opposition. Nay, she expressed her full desire to help me in every way.

"I came to this resolve in the month of December 1882. It

was perhaps in the end of the second week of December that a great preacher of the Salvation Army, Major Tucker, came to Lahore with his wife and a few workers. They held a meeting in the Rang Mahal. I attended that meeting. Their admirable sacrifice for the cause of their religion and a short address of Mrs. Tucker silently helped to strengthen me in my contemplated step."

"It was the 15th of December and only five days more remained in my birthday. I wrote at once an application resigning my post. It was as under :—

To

The Director,
Public Instruction, Punjab.

Sir,

Having felt a call from heaven that my services are required in another sphere of life, I feel my inability to retain my present post, and consequently beg to resign it after serving the Government for the last 14 years.

I shall feel obliged by your accepting this my resignation and issuing early orders to relieve me from the office.

I beg to add with your permission that I shall consider myself as freed from my present duties after 15 days, according to the ordinary rules of Government service, unless I receive instructions from you to the contrary.

LAHORE :
15th Dec. 1882.

} I remain
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Sd.) S. N. AGNIHOTRI."

"I placed my resignation before Mr. Steins, Headmaster. He read it and was literally taken aback. He was silent for some minutes and at last said :—

Headmaster—I am very sorry that you are going.

I—I am not sorry in the least.

Headmaster—Have you well considered over the matter ?

I—Yes.

Headmaster—Have you got family and children ?

I—Yes, a wife and three children.

Headmaster—You have duty towards God as well as towards your wife and children.

I—Certainly. But I am not going to neglect my duty towards my wife and children.

Headmaster—Will you get any pay ?

I—No, I depend on the Lord. He will provide.

Headmaster—Shall I send your resignation to-day or put it off for to-morrow ?

I—Please send it on to-day.

Headmaster—Are you decided ?

I—Yes, I am decided about it."

HOW THE PUBLIC RECEIVED THESE NEWS.

Bhagwan put in his resignation in the face of great material and other difficulties that confronted him and his family. He wanted no pay from any person or any society. He did not expect any emoluments even in the shape of mere honorarium from his own society of which he was an accredited worker. The supreme object for which he took a leap in the unknown was to save human souls from the grip of falsehood and evil, and evolve in them such higher and noble heart-forces as may enable them to get free from their hellish behaviour and establish higher harmony and sweet concord with various existences in Nature. This was indeed the greatest and the highest service which could be done to man. But it is indeed a tragic sight that those, for whose highest good Bhagwan threw himself body and soul in the mightiest struggle ever faced by a mighty soul, took the first and the earliest opportunity of altogether misunderstanding him, and not only placed before him the mighty blocks of determined opposition but indulged in the most gruesome task of abusing and slandering his fairest name and tearing his reputation to thinnest shreds. Says Bhagwan :—

"As soon as I put in my resignation a mighty commotion arose all around. From the four corners began to come thick and fast the arrows of opposition. How could it be possible for those person to comprehend, and appreciate the grandeur of the new step that I took, who were devoid of the highest psychic forces that had evolved in my soul, who were blind to the existence of higher life of soul, who were themselves destitute of any longing of heart for any great and noble spiritual ideal, who were swayed by the low loves of wealth, property, fame, name, public applause or popular plaudit, power, position, etc., swamped by the current or popular false beliefs, superstitions and wrong practices ? Hence such (non-understanding) persons began to pass judgments on me from their respective angles of worldly wisdom. All such persons began to hurl various calumnies against me. Though those who were comparatively of a better disposition did not express anything vulgar, yet they contended themselves with saying that the step that I took was in their opinion a great blunder, especially when I had a big family (to maintain). Those, who cherished feelings of hostility against me, aimed poisonous darts at me. They maligned me in various ways by calling me a cheat, a fraud, etc. Only one or two persons from my own society were such, as expressed no opposition though they too did not side with me enthusiastically. A gentleman who possessed feeling of respect for me but did not approve of my step, wrote to me a frank

letter about it. Some of them who had some reverence for me, expressed a desire to wait on me in deputation and talk over with me about my step. But I refused to comply with their wishes. The letter which Babu Chandra Nath Mittra wrote to Babu Navin Chandra Roy relating to this was as follows :—

My dear Navin Babu !

The para : in *The Tribune* had convinced me that all efforts to make Agnihotri recede will be useless. Yourself and others are of the same opinion. So let us drop the matter.

18th December, 1882.

Sincerely yours,

(Sd.) CHANDRA NATH MITTRA.

UNIQUE CEREMONY.

The step that Bhagwan determined to take was the most momentous step in his life. The vow that he decided to take as the supreme vow and the highest object of his life was indeed transcendental in the whole history of the world. Bhagwan rightly felt it as the most sacred thing. Hence he made both inside and outside preparations of a kind which were worthy of the occasion. Says Bhagwan :—

“After putting in my resignation I decided that four days after (i.e., on 20th December, 1882 being the 32nd birthday of my life), I would embrace my unique vow in a public meeting by performing a special ceremony. A notice about it was given in the columns of *The Tribune*.

“I went heart and soul into making preparations for this unique ceremony. Pandit Navin Chandra Roy—a well-known scholar of Hindu *Shastras*—prepared an altogether new programme of ceremonial for this purpose. He rightly designated this new ceremonial of its kind as the “*Brahm Sannys*.” This was specially done to demarcate it from the prevalent “*Hindu Sannys*” with which it had no connection at all. The programme contained the following six parts :—

1. *Achar* (Behaviour).
2. *Karam* (Deed).
3. *Tiyag* (Sacrifice).
4. *Grihisthi* (Family duties).
5. *Dharam Palan* (Adherence to duty).
6. *Brahmyog* (Union with Brahm).”

“This ceremony was to be performed in Brahm Mandir on Wednesday, the 20th December, 1882 in the evening. The hall of Brahm Mandir was tastefully decorated previously for this ceremony. The front portion of the hall was allotted for the seating of men and the back portion separated by a screen was reserved for

ladies. On return from the school in the evening I got myself clean shaven *i. e.*, all the hair of my head, beard and moustaches were shaved. I then took a full bath. Thereafter I put on *gerva* (ochre coloured) dress which was prepared for the occasion, and accompanied by my wife and children I reached the Brahm Mandir a little before the appointed hour. I took my seat at the place previously fixed for me. Even before I entered the hall it was packed to a point of congestion with men and women who had thronged there to witness the ceremony. Those who could get no seat kept standing in crowds in the verandahs near the doors of the hall. This huge assemblage contained those also who cherished feelings of hostility to me though they were all God-worshippers. They had come prepared owing to their (wickedness) to create disturbance in the performance of this sacred ceremony. They commenced raising loud noises and whistling and hissing. These evil-natured souls had the sinful intention of not allowing the ceremony to proceed to its successful end. Seeing all this I at once got up and pointing at my *geruik* (ochrous) dress and moved by my inner powerful higher feelings, I made a forceful appeal to them that if they did not possess any other sense of humanity, they should at least have respect for the dress which had for centuries past commanded esteem and regard in this land. This appeal went home to them. The whole hall was hushed into dead silence. The work of the ceremony began in peace. After offering preliminary prayers Pandit Navin Chandra Roy began the work in accordance with his newly prepared plan. The programme of this ceremonial was as under:—

1. *Nam Karan* (Naming ceremony).
2. Reading of *Shastric* injunctions with their explanation.
3. Repetition of the *mantra*.
4. Sermon from the conductor.
5. Prayer by the conductor.
6. Hymns or songs.
7. Expression of feeling by the undertaker of the vow (*i. e.*, Bhagwan Dev Atma).
8. Prayer by the *Bratdhari* (*i. e.*, Bhagwan).
9. Song.
10. Blessings by the conductor.
11. Blessings by others.
12. A chorus song by the members."

"The conductor seated me by himself and first put me some preliminary questions. After I had given replies to them, he, as planned before with my consent, gave me the new name of 'Sattyanand.' He then read some *mantras* from the *Shastras* regarding the six parts of his newly prepared course, giving their translation and here and there dilating upon their meaning. He then made me repeat the great *mantra* which I had accepted relating to my life-vow

and which he knew already. After a short sermon, he offered prayers for the success of my unique vow. Then a song was sung. After that I got up and began to express my feelings. So far as I remember my expressions were approximately these :—

“The whole of this scene to-day is a rare one. My life-vow too is completely of a unique nature. I feel myself to-day in this new dress and new form like a bride who enters into a sacred wedlock before this vast gathering of hundreds of persons after having accepted holy pledges which she means to loyally keep all through her life. I have indeed solemnised to-day another, yet an unparalleled kind of marriage. I fervently pray that in all my inner thoughts and outward deeds, I may remain, for the whole of my life, loyal and faithful to the supreme vow for the propagating of the highest beautiful Truth and Goodness to which I am pledged to-day, as a devoted and faithful wife, who, having pledged herself to a life long wedlock to her husband, gives him the supreme place in her heart in all her relations ; who never deviates an inch from her supreme pledge under all kinds of hundreds of favourable or unfavourable circumstances and conditions of life ; who gives him alone the crowning place in her heart, remaining true to her vow through weal and woe, good and bad fortune, health and disease, happiness and sorrow, youth and old age, beauty and deformity, fear and trials ; who always remains loyal to his person and does not prove disloyal or unfaithful to him even in thought. Being a complete lover of my supreme life-vow may my whole life be spent in the service of the whole world.

“As I have embraced the mission of the good of the whole world, it is but inevitable for me to live in this world and struggle hard to destroy, as far as possible, the reign of untruth and evil whenever and wherever existing in various relations of mankind, and to create and establish in its stead the reign of truth and goodness. Hence my renunciation will not at all be of the nature of the renunciation of those selfish *sadhus*, *bairagies*, *sanyasis* and *fakirs* of this land who believe in breaking off various ties of relationship and abandon all the right responsibilities in connection with them. My renunciation would rightly consist in making all kinds of sacrifices of wealth, fame, popularity, happiness, comfort, health and power, etc., which may be necessary for fulfilling my highly difficult mission. I have to make the most arduous struggles for it in converting human souls from the life of low-loves and low-hates, whereby they have created various kinds of falsehoods and evils making this earth a veritable hell, and rendered all connections and relations most harmful for one another, and whereby they have dethroned living religion of higher life and enthroned irreligious or lower life in their hearts. They have thus produced in all their various relations terrible misery, pain, sorrow and agony resulting in pitiable cries and lamentations. I have to evolve in their hearts higher forces of higher life in place of all that. This kind of complete sacrifice or *Tiyag* in the fulfilment of my highest mission will be my true *Sannyas*.

"For a long time I had had to pass through a great mental struggle in connection with my this life-vow. On the one hand I felt in my heart an urge from God to take this step, and on the other, my financial difficulties and various other prospective troubles and sufferings loomed large before me, standing as a bar in my way of taking this great leap in the unknown. But in this great conflict, my higher powers of higher life ultimately triumphed. Life of Mahatma Buddha considerably helped me in my decision. My resolution became more firm. I realised that I was born with a definite destiny of accomplishing this great life-vow. With this truth growing clearer before me, I put in my resignation from my Government service on Friday last. And to-day in this public gathering *I take up this unique vow with complete earnestness of heart and feelings of genuine joy and intense enthusiasm.*

"From to-day this my life-vow would be the supreme factor in all my dealings with others. *From to-day I would regulate my relations with you all keeping this highest spiritual ideal as a pole star before me.* To do everything for its success would be the supreme work of my life.

"In conclusion I beg some alms of you all in furtherance of the success of my life-vow. Don't take an alarm at the word 'alms.' The alms that I pray of you are nothing but benedictions. Those of you present here who enjoy youth should bestow upon me the ardour of your blooming youth. Those of you who are old and have grown indifferent to one or other worldly ambition may lend me the gift of that feeling. Those of you who are children may grant me your innocence and quietude of mind; and the chaste and pure-minded ladies among you may bless me with your feeling of chastity and fidelity.

"These expressions of my feelings very perceptibly moved the hearts of majority in the big audience and many of the men and women were seen shedding tears and even sobbing. In the end I prayed. Thereafter, the conductor and some others offered their blessings and expressed good wishes. This unique ceremony came to a close with an inspirational song.

FEELING DIVINELY BLESSED AND FREE.

How Bhagwan Dev Atma felt after he had publicly taken this unique step, is better expressed in his own words :—

"Immediately after I put in my resignation, I felt my heart wonderfully elevated. After the great ceremony was over, I felt myself in an altogether new world. All my higher forces grew more powerful and illuminating. A new light flooded my heart. As a captive feels free and happy when, on the expiry of the term of his imprisonment, his handcuffs are taken off and he is released, so did I feel myself not only free and happy but hundreds of times more blessed. I actually felt myself as a fish would feel which is

cast again into welcome waters after having been stranded for some time on dry land. I felt as if every kingdom of evolutionary Nature which had been struggling for ages to produce this beneficent phenomenon blessed me with hundreds of mute but eloquent tongues. These mute but most glorious blessings considerably inspired and enthused my heart which vibrated to the notes of pure and most felicitous experiences. I felt that now the grand object of my birth on this earth had been fulfilled to some extent."

Bhagwan continued to go to the school after this ceremony for three or four days when the school closed for seven or eight days on account of Christmas holidays. When the holidays were over Bhagwan pressed hard that he may be relieved from his duties. His application of resignation was mislaid somewhere. His friends jumped to the conclusion that that was a God-given hint that he should not resign. But Bhagwan never believed in this absurd notion. And once resolved on an action, he could never be swayed to the contrary by any adverse combination of circumstances. He put in a fresh copy of the application when he was at last relieved from the school duties after a few days. With phenomenal energy and devotion of unprecedented kind, he now threw himself heart and soul into the struggle for accomplishment of his unique Life-Vow.

While explaining his life-mission, Bhagwan had publicly and emphatically declared, that it did not matter in the least whether a man was literate or illiterate, polytheist or monothiest, but so long he was a slave to low-loves and low-hates, he was bound to develop a life of sin and undue attachments. The outward profession of such a man of his belief in God was a rank mockery. He made it clear to men in general that so long as they did not awaken to the consciousness of sin and struggled to get freedom from it, and so long as they did not develop feeling of true purity and unselfish service of others, they should neither expect any true salvation from the life of sin and undue attachments and their consequent miseries, nor any true and higher good of their souls or their country.

Says Bhagwan Dev Atma in his *Autobiography* Volume I, page 93 :—

"I fully realised that so long as any man did not grow definite consciousness of the horrors of the life of sin and undue attachments (or life of low-loves and low-hates) and did not develop higher love of getting freedom from that low life and evolving higher life in himself, all his reading of scriptures, repeating of *mantras*, worship, ceremonials, etc., in the name of religion were quite useless, whether he was a Hindu, Christian, Musalman, Buddhist, etc. I had composed several hymns to draw the attention of the people of all denominations to the great necessity of such 'new life.' One of these hymns began thus :—

“ Be saved, now, be saved here on this planet,
Give up life of sin and grow in new life ;
Unless you develop new life you will never be free from sin,
Be you outwardly a Musalman, Hindu or Christian.”

“ It was this new or higher life which it was my chief work to propagate in the hearts of persons of all denominations for their true benefit. It was this glorious work which kept me wholly absorbed. Attracted by my activities various souls began to imbibe my higher psychic influences and thus turn a new leaf of higher life. My own soul too developed, as a matter of course, into the supremely blessed life of *Dev Jiwan*.”

PART V

BREAK WITH THE BRAHMO SAMAJ AND ESTABLISH-
MENT OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

INTRODUCTION.

Bhagwan Dev Atma took up his unique life-vow in December 1882. He was then a Brahmo. He was not simply a member of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, but he was the very life and soul of that society. Unfortunately for him the late L. Kashi Ram had a personal grudge against Bhagwan Dev Atma. Such an antagonistic attitude of mind on the part of a man who was personally indebted to Bhagwan and who passed for a religious man, was really something bewildering. But even such a man was forced to admit in the course of a scurrilous pamphlet that he wrote against Bhagwan :—

“ We are still thankful to him (Bhagwan) for the great services he rendered to the cause of theism in this province. Indeed I do not know any Brahmo living or dead who worked more zealously in propagating the truths of Brahmoism in our part of the country in those good old days.”

In fact Bhagwan Dev Atma raised Brahmo Samaj to a great power in the land. His absolutely clean and noble character, his fearless advocacy of religious, social, educational and even political reform, his most marvellous gifts of eloquence, the great power of his pen, his phenomenal energy, and the extraordinary consistency that he showed in his preachings and practices won for him deep religious awe and reverence in the hearts of very large number of people and attracted large audience wherever he spoke. People literally hung upon his lips.

Had Bhagwan been a popularity hunter, he would have most easily ruled the great audiences and passed for a great and unique popular hero. But he was not made that way. His unique powers of love of Truth and Goodness made him an uncompromising enemy of all sham, all hypocrisy, all untruth, and all kinds of evil, and produced in him an almost unquenchable thirst to see humanity so far and so wonderfully changed and standardised as to cease from consciously doing wrong to the human and sub-human worlds and to feel an irrepressible prompting to contribute to the greatest welfare of others. He had a master motive force in him to change the heart of humanity. Mere belief in this or that God was a matter of supreme unconcern to him, so long as man underwent no higher change in his life. We find Bhagwan emphasising this great truth repeatedly and persistently that religion means truly noble behaviour in our daily life. The pages of *Dharm Jiwan*, the paper which Bhagwan started after he embraced his unique life-vow were full of this new and vibrant note of this great fervour, this zealous love for clean, pure, elevated and serviceable life. We come across the following paragraph in the *Dharm Jiwan* for April, 1885 which is illustrative of Bhagwan's attitude towards religious life. He wrote :—

"In this world men as a rule go in for cheap bargains. This attitude develops a temperament in man to greedily lay hands upon all such things as could be had for nothing. In the world of religion, this attitude of man has gone to an extreme.....To-day we find religion standing not for true godly life but for belief in God. If you ask any man, "What is your religion?," he would at once understand that you want to know from him as to what sect he belongs to or what creed he believes in. Nobody enquires of another as to who rules his heart or whom he really worships. From this stand-point of view, we can safely say that there are only two alternatives open to man ; either he worships sensuality or he worships Divinity. *But religion is now such a cheap affair, and fraud and falsehoods are so rampant in it, that mere cultured people pass as God-worshippers when they are in fact world or sensuality worshippers.* In this wrong attitude of mind they take undue pride, and loudly claim that they worship ONE God, without a second and look down upon others because they are idol-worshippers. Friends ! you ought to know that religion is not so cheap an affair, and religiosity or life of religion is not a commodity whihc can be had for no price. *By change of profession you do not change your character or inner life.* While leading the life of *nafs parasti* (sensuality worship), you do not become a Divinity worshipper, merely because you profess to be one. *Worship of Divine Head is impossible so long as man does not set his face against sin, so long as he has not bid adieu to sensual or worldly life and so long as he has not developed love for true knowledge, justice, sympathy, devotion and purity of character.....* Readers ! we do not therefore ask you to what sect you belong but to whom do you assign the sovereign place on the throne of your heart—sensuality or Divinity ? If to the former you are doomed, you can never get freedom from the life of sin and evil. Nay, every day you will add to the great load of sins that would press damnably on your soul. You will thus be thrown farther and farther away from the haven of salvation. *Arise, awaken, be not misled by the mere name of the creed you follow.* Do not deceive yourself that you worship Divinity, when in fact your heart pays homage to sensuality. You are in fact not a God-worshipper. Realise your sinful life, and awaken to its horrors and in order to get freedom from that destructive state, seek the feet of true Divinity." (Italics are ours.)

This shows plainly that Bhagwan could not be satisfied with mere belief or creeds when the life lived by the votaries was sinful. Hence it was impossible for him to be satisfied with the Brahmo Samaj or any other Samaj or Sabha when he saw even some of the greatest leaders in that society divorcing character from their beliefs and leading in fact a life of world-worship, though they posed to be worshippers of one God.

By and by Bhagwan by his personal experience found Brahmo Samaj to be more an impediment than a fit medium for the working of his unique psychic forces. Hence it was but inevitable that in course of time, he should part company with that society

and find a suitable vehicle for the unfettered exercise of his unique forces for the highest good of mankind.

The burden of the present part would therefore be a brief history of the causes which led Bhagwan Dev Atma to break of all his connections with the Brahmo Samaj and to found his own new society, the Dev Samaj. It will also give a brief history of the radical changes which Bhagwan Dev Atma introduced from time to time into the constitution of his Samaj, in the light of his growing unique forces and experience, and the most blessed features that he introduced into his unique society to make it more and more useful and efficient in furthering his unique life-mission and ideal.

I.

BRAHMO SAMAJ STOOD UNMASKED.

"I came to Lahore," writes Bhagwan in Chapter IV of 'My unique renunciations.' Part I, "toward the end of the year 1873 on my transfer from Roorkee College to the Department of Public Instruction, Punjab. I then believed in the Vedantic philosophy and also in the so-called God as the Creator of the universe. I had given up all beliefs in various Hindu gods and goddesses in favour of the belief in one God as a true worshipful Being. I had also given many false and unmeaning rites and ceremonies prevalent for centuries which owed their origin to priest-craft. I cherished deep reverence for *Shrimad Bhagad Gita*.....Brahmo Samaj existed at Lahore many years before I came there. I was drawn to it because I found in that society a very near approach to the beliefs and thoughts that I held in those days with regard to religion, social reform, etc. For a pretty long time I studied and pondered over its objects and teachings. Having found them consistent with my beliefs, I joined it, as far as I remember, in 1875. My connection with this society continued for about twelve years . . .".

"It was either in the same year when I joined the Samaj or in the next year that I was nominated as an *Acharya* missionary of the Samaj. In 1876, I was elected a member of the Managing Committee of the Samaj. Besides this I was also elected as the Secretary of the society for the diffusion of theism which was separately started in those days for the propagation of *Brahma Dharma*. For about a year or so, I wrote, translated and published several books for this propaganda. Up to 1877, I worked in the society with equanimity of mind. Till then I had had no opportunity of knowing much about the inner state of the Samaj and its workers. But after that the curtain began to rise and continued to rise. I witnessed scenes for several years which were a painful revelation to me . . ."

FIRST PAINFUL REVELATION.

The first painful experience that made an abiding impression on Bhagwan Dev Atma was the false step which the great leader of the "Brahmo Samaj of India," Babu Keshab Chandra Sen took, when he agreed to give his minor girl in marriage to the minor Maharaja of Kuch Behar. This step was all the more painful because this great leader had taken the most active part in agitating against child marriage and had by strenuous endeavours succeeded in persuading the Government of India to pass an Act which was at first proposed to be called the Brahmo Marriage Act, but was subsequently named as "Civil Marriage Act of 1872." This Act, which may reasonably be called Babu K. C. Sen Act, prescribed the minimum marriageable age of the wedding parties as fourteen in case of girls and eighteen in

case of boys. Mr. Sen considered these minimum ages of the marrying couple very unsatisfactory for himself and his fellow believers. In a public meeting he openly declared :—

“ For the present at least it would be expedient to follow the provisions of the Bill, which makes fourteen the minimum marriageable age of girls in the country, leaving in the hands of time to develop the reform slowly and gradually into maturity and fullness.” (*Vide* S. N. Shastri's book, *The New Dispensation and the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*). ”

But it is tragic that in spite of all these open declarations, he succumbed to the first temptation that came in his way. An offer was made to him of the hand of the minor Maharaja of Kuch Behar for his eldest minor girl. This was the time for the great leader to show his true metal. This was the time for him to set a noble example of loyalty to his ideals in the face of the towering temptation. This was a time for him to show that he was not a lip patriot or a pseudo reformer. But he was bowled over by the first impulse of temptation. When the offer was made to him, he not only gladly agreed to it but actually got the marriage ceremony performed of his girl under fourteen years of age with a bridegroom who was not even sixteen years of age. This leader of Brahmo Samaj accepted also ten thousand rupees for the marriage expenses of his daughter. All this was quite demeaning even to an ordinary gentleman, but it was inexcusable in the case of a leader.

Again, the marriage was not celebrated according to the Civil Marriage Act. It was not performed even according to the code of Brahmo rites prepared by Keshab Babu himself. It was celebrated according to *idolatrous Hindu rites* at the house of the bridegroom in Kuch Behar State where Mr. Sen had taken his daughter. Mr. Sen himself was not allowed to give the girl in marriage, as he was believed to have been polluted by his voyage to Europe. The symbols of *Har* and *Gauri*—the two fictitious marriage gods of the Hindu mythology were kept there as sacred objects, as already stated in Part IV.

To Bhagwan Dev Atma all this came as a very strange experience. Like several other Brahmos of Calcutta, he felt all this behaviour of Mr. Sen as suicidal to the cause of reform and degrading to the honour and prestige of Brahmo Samaj. To add insult to injury this great leader instead of apologising for the wrong step into which he was betrayed by his weakness and expressing regret at the harm, he had done to the cause he held dear, assumed a most defiant attitude. He once said :—

“ But men have attempted to prove that I have been guided by my own imagination, reason and intellect. Upon this conviction they have protested against my proceedings. They should remember that to protest against the cause I uphold is to protest against the dispensation of God.”

Again, he said :—

“ Surely I am not to blame for anything which I may have done under Heaven’s command. If any one is to blame, the Lord God of Heavens is to blame.”

As one false step leads to another and even a worse one, Mr. Sen, in order to uphold his wrong conduct, began to teach something which was destructive of all right reason and right life. In the *Dharm Tattwa* Mr. Sen laid down the following horrible principle of conduct for himself and his blind followers :—

“ If anybody believes that it is God’s command that he should commit theft, who is more infallible than God himself to decide whether he is right or wrong.”

Such baneful teachings of Mr. Sen emboldened one of his followers to declare that he must follow God’s voice, even if it went against the laws of common morality and reason. Miss Collet has quoted these words in her Year-book for 1878—79 on page 77 :—

“ It is not at all strange that God’s will thus revealed (through prayer) to a devotee may at times be at variance with the laws of common morality and reason, which God himself has implanted in us inasmuch as we finite beings are unable to see through the inscrutable ways of God’s dealings with us. But the devotee therefore cannot disobey what is revealed to him to be the will of God, which is the only standard of perfect rectitude in man.”

How horrible these teachings ! Foresooth ? that will of God must indeed be a strange will when it smothers reason and destroys moral principles ! Had Mr. Sen really possessed the moral and spiritual courage to own a fault, he would not have driven his own soul and the souls of his blind followers into an abyss of untruth and wrong. This conduct of the great leader who believed in perennial inspiration produced the dreadful mischief. A meeting was held by the supporters of Mr. Sen to discredit the protestors. In that meeting false and unreliable documents were produced and bewildering statements made to uphold their own wrong position. All this revealed to Bhagwan the moral stamina of his fellow believers.

PAINFUL EXPERIENCE OF PUNJAB BRAHMO SAMAJISTS.

Bhagwan was more deeply pained at the conduct of his Punjab Brahmo friends. An appeal was made by the Bengalee protestors against Mr. Sen’s Kuch Behar marriage to all Samajes to express their opinion against such a wrong act. They sent a full written report of the affair. The Lahore Brahmos received that appeal. But as many of them had foolishly believed Mr. Sen to be a prophet, they would not respond to this appeal. Bhagwan had to work alone against odds. He laid before his co-believers his own views and told them that truth and righteousness demanded that they

should side with a just cause and not disappoint those who were battling against a wrong act. After long persuasions, Bhagwan succeeded in having a general meeting in which the following resolution was after all passed as already referred to in Part IV :—

“That this meeting has learnt with concern that the marriage of Babu K. C. Sen’s daughter is not going to be celebrated according to Act III of 1872 and is open to other objections and that Mr. Sen being the recognised leader of the Brahmo Samaj of India, should have taken this step which is calculated to cast a gloom over the rising church of the Brahmo Samaj. This meeting after mature deliberation, and on the strength of the letters received from Calcutta Brahmos, puts on record with regret that the proposed marriage if it actually takes place, will not have concurrence of the Brahmos.”

This resolution even though duly passed was not entered into the record of proceedings of the Samaj because of the low tactics of some leading members. Says Bhagwan, “When after several months I came to know of this painful conduct of these people, I felt very severely shocked and such an unjust behaviour of theirs left a very bad impression on my mind.”

It is our belief and it is the common experience of the world that when a man undertakes to defend a wrong, there can be no limit to his degradation. For, by his defence of wrong, he sells himself to evil, metaphorically called Satan. As Mr. Sen himself did not adopt the only safe course of owning a fault, he and his followers began to abuse and persecute those who condemned his wrong conduct. This led Mr. Sen to call protestors, even “infidels,” “demons in human shape,” etc., and thus paved a way for his followers to imitate his conduct. This brought about a rift and at last the Brahmo Samaj of India was broken into two parties—the protestors calling their section “Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.” At Lahore too there became two parties in the Brahmo Samaj.

This was not the only evil which Mr. Sen’s act brought about in the church of Brahmo Samaj. As soon as the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj was established at Calcutta, a missionary of that party proposed to go on tour to various centres, to win sympathy of the Brahmos to their Party. That missionary expressed a desire to visit Punjab too. On behalf of Lahore Samaj, a regular invitation was sent to him. This was all in order. But partisans of Mr. Sen at Calcutta could not bear to see a protestor going to Punjab. They should have, in all honesty and fairness, asked the Lahore Samaj to send for a missionary of their Party too. But this open conduct was inconsistent with the wrong road that they had chosen to tread. Hence Mr. P. C. Muzumdar—a great disciple of Mr. Sen—wrote a letter to a young Bengalee Brahmo at Lahore, suggesting to him to get some invitation sent to him (Mr. Muzumdar) for coming to Lahore and delivering lectures. This Bengali gentleman belonged to Mr. Sen’s party. He influenced a few men of his way of thinking

privately to sign an invitation letter to Mr. Muzumdar to visit Lahore. The protestors at Lahore were all kept in darkness about all this. They came to know only when the news was published in the *Indian Mirror* Calcutta, that the Lahore Samaj had invited Mr. Muzumdar for propaganda work. It was untrue that Lahore Samaj as a body had invited him. Bhagwan was at Agra in those days staying with Babu Navin Chander Roy. Bhagwan read this news for the first time there. His amazement knew no bounds. This false statement roused Bhagwan's just indignation. He told Mr. Roy that it was not true that an invitation was sent to Mr. Muzumdar by the *whole body* of Lahore Samaj. Upon this, Mr. Roy asked Bhagwan to contradict the statement. Bhagwan there and then wrote out the contradiction and sent one copy each to *Indian Mirror* and *Brahmo Public Opinion* organs of the Sen party and Sadharan Brahmo Samaj respectively. The *Indian Mirror*, it is sad to say, did not publish the contradiction but the other paper did. As soon as the contradiction was published, it created great consternation in the circle of those partisans of Mr. Sen at Lahore who were responsible for this dishonest step. Now the only right position for them was to have owned that it was true that the whole Samaj had not invited Mr. Muzumdar but that a few admirers of Mr. Muzumdar had sent the said invitation to him. But Mr. Sen and his followers had perhaps lost sight of that safe course of conduct and hence Mr. Sen's followers at Lahore adopted another wrong course. They brought to bear a heavy pressure upon the Secretary to sign a note in which it was written that it was a fact that Mr. Muzumdar was invited by the whole Samaj. This was sent to the *Brahmo Public Opinion* which very naturally published this piece of news also. When Bhagwan read this his love of truth received the severest shock. He at once sent a rejoinder to the same paper, in which he challenged them to prove when and at what place any such meeting of the general body or the Managing Committee had been held in which the resolution for inviting Mr. Muzumdar was passed. In fact this matter was brought before no meeting of the general body or the Managing Committee. The persons responsible for the invitation knew it. But they believed that it would be possible for them to manipulate fiction into a fact. Hence they again bestirred themselves to have recourse to still further wrong course of conduct. Mr. Muzumdar had in the mean time reached Lahore. He and his Lahore partisans put their heads together to find a way to get out of the tight corner into which their wrong conduct had led them. They hit upon a plan which they believed would extricate them from the false position. A list was prepared which was signed not only by Mr. Sen's party men, but also by some other members whom they could influence. In this it was stated that all the signatories had jointly invited Mr. Muzumdar to Lahore. They believed that an invitation signed by so many members was tantamount to an invitation from the whole Samaj. This list along with a rejoinder was sent to the *Brahmo Public Opinion*. The editor published the rejoinder along with the

list of names of the signatories. This course, though utterly sinful, filled these people with a confidence that they had for all time succeeded in suppressing truth. But Nature has no stomach for such lies. The lover of truth could not brook a lie to triumph over truth. But it all the same severely shocked his heart. Bhagwan writes in the above quoted book :—

“I cannot adequately describe the agonies which I passed through owing to the mean intrigues of these partisans of falsehood. My heart burst into a lament and said :—“Can this be the result of my love of truth ? Will the partisans of falsehood walk with erect head before me, gloating over the victory of their falsehood ? No ! no ! this can never be.”

Bhagwan took up this new challenge. He at once prepared a questionnaire with columns containing following questions :—

1. It is reported in the *Indian Mirror* of the 4th August 1878 that Babu Partap Chandra Muzumdar was invited to Lahore by the Brahmos of Lahore. Please say if any opinion in the matter was taken from you either verbally or in writing *before that date*.

2. Was that letter of the Secretary which has together with a list (in which your name is also entered) appeared in the *Brahmo Public Opinion* of 28th November, shown to you *before* your signature on the list was obtained ?

3. Were you present at Lahore in the end of July 1878, when the letter of invitation was sent to Babu Partap Chandra from Lahore ?

The paper containing these questions was placed by Bhagwan before those who had signed the list above referred to. They knew quite well that their bubble of falsehood would burst if they put true replies to the queries made therein. Hence some of them totally declined to answer the questionnaire. After very strenuous efforts Bhagwan could succeed with only six of them to get that form filled in with whatever replies they thought fit to put down. All the rest refused. This behaviour of his own co-believers came like a terrible experience to Bhagwan. It is true that some of these six persons did try to prevaricate in their replies ; but the truth was out. Some wrote that they were never consulted in the matter. Some wrote that they were not even at Lahore when the invitation was sent, nor were they consulted by letters. Thus the lie stood exposed putting to shame its partisans. Bhagwan got the above copy of replies to queries attested by a barrister as true copy. He then sent a copy of that questionnaire with a strong rejoinder to the editor of *Brahmo Public Opinion* on 30th December. When the editor of the *Brahmo Public Opinion* was thus convinced, he wrote very strongly, fully supporting the truth. Says Bhagwan :—

“When all these facts were published, the lovers of falsehood received a well-merited and disgraceful defeat. But such a conduct of these God-worshippers and lip professors of religion dealt a blow to my heart which my heart alone can realise.”

Bhagwan had also written two letters to that Bengalee Brahmo at Lahore belonging to the party of Keshab Babu who was responsible for all this rigmarole. Of these the letter dated 11th December 1878 was concluded by Bhagwan with the following significant words :—

“ I love truth and will always advocate it. I shall gladly follow any person who leads me to it, *but no amount of influence or force or combination can ever make me abandon and sacrifice it.* If my friends are disgusted with me for my this *uncompromising regard for truth*, I am only too sorry for them.”

Could the Bengalee Brahmo have realised these words of Bhagwan Dev Atma ? Could he have ever awakened to the horror of those low and underhand tactics, which he had practised in order to uphold a lie ? We doubt it very much.

Says Bhagwan :—

“ My truth and goodness-loving heart received a deep wound when I saw these people showing not only absence of any feeling of reverence for true higher life but ever ready to side with or even to have recourse to falsehood and injustice of one or other kind in the hour of necessity. I was overwhelmed with sorrow at seeing all this. It was in such a state that I repeatedly felt, that it was not possible for me to carry on satisfactorily the essential work of building true and higher life by remaining among or co-operating with these men. Hence in accordance with my such higher promptings, I definitely resigned my membership and the office of *Acharya* of the Samaj. I started in Lahore a Prarthna Sabha in January 1879 with three or four congenial souls and began to hold weekly congregational meetings in the hall of my own house in order to impart to them my higher influences.”

II

THE PUNJAB CENTRAL BRAHMO SAMAJ.

But though Bhagwan resigned his membership of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, he was all the same a Brahmo. The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta ordained Bhagwan Dev Atma and three others including the late Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri, M. A., as regular missionaries on their anniversary in 1880. Bhagwan continued to work the Prarthna Sabha for a year and a half. But on the 8th of May, 1880, he founded a new society under the name of the "Central Punjab Brahmo Samaj." It was renamed "Punjab Central Brahmo Samaj" on 19th May, 1880. Two months after this Bhagwan hired a separate house for his society in the near vicinity of his own residential house and with the uncommon zeal which he possessed he commenced higher life-building work that was so dear to his heart.

As Bhagwan's influences reached many a heart, the scope of his activities grew larger and wider. In order to extend the circle of his work still further, he established several branches of his work under the names of "Bhiratri Sammelani Sabha," "Sadhak Mandali," "Samdarshi Sabha," "Students' Club," etc. Bhagwan also toured to other places. A "Bhajan Sabha" was started at Anritsar for the good of those who were attracted towards him. The "Simla Hills Brahmo Samaj" of those days attached itself as a branch to the Punjab Central Brahmo Samaj. Bhagwan went to far and distant places in order to hold congregational meetings or deliver his illuminating lectures. At Lahore Bhagwan delivered a series of lectures, three of them were on the subject of "the present condition of the women of India and the ways and means of raising their status." These lectures were delivered in the "Sikhasha Sabha Hall." Bhagwan also went to Multan. The monthly organ which he conducted at that time became a very useful vehicle in his hands in order to propagate his ideals. Two English tracts also were published by this new society in the first year.

But though Bhagwan Dev Atma confined his activities mainly to the propagation of the society he had founded, he was ever ready to do good to those Nava Bidhani Brahmos, (*i.e.* Keshab Chandra Sen's followers) in spite of their worst persecutions of Bhagwan. The man who took the greatest part in maligning Bhagwan and proving a thorn in his side was none other than the late Rai Sahib Lala Kashi Ram who was a staunch Brahmo and who was President of his society at the time of his death. The Lala was a great partisan or follower of Babu K. C. Sen and stood by his *Guru* even in his fall. Human mind is sometimes very curious. It feels attraction towards those that are in a way akin to it. Babu K. C. Sen violated a great

principle of his life by marrying his own eldest daughter who was a minor to a minor Maharaja and by non-Brahmo rites. Lala Kashi Ram followed suit by celebrating his own marriage not by Brahmo reformed rites but by idolatrous Hindu rites. He took leaf from the book of his Guru. This is how a fall of a great man proves most disastrous for mankind; for it does not mean only his fall but also the fall of those hundreds and thousands and in some cases millions who revere and worship him. The Prophet of Islam has made slaughter of poor dumb useful and serviceable animals into an institution, so much so that Musalmans on the occasion of Id-ul-Zuha alone slaughter countless animals. His polygamous marriages have made polygamy an institution to be followed by millions. His marriage with a minor girl has made millions of Musalmans enemies even of Sarda Act, which penalises marriage of girls before the age of fourteen. Guru Gobind Singh took flesh, *bhang* and opium and went out on hunting expeditions. The taking of *bhang* is practised in some Sikh *Gurdwaras*, while flesh-taking is so common among them that some of the Sikhs proudly say that their *Guru* made flesh of animals lawful. Mahatma Buddha took flesh of pig at a disciple's table, merely because he did not want to disappoint him. The result is that the followers of even this most compassionate great man take flesh of dead animals or carcasses. Christ took fish and flesh and is said to have converted water into wine. Why? Undoubtedly for the purpose of drinking. Hence great majority of even the missionaries of Christ take flesh and most of them do not consider it a sin to take a peg or two. When this is the case with missionaries, one can imagine the state of the laity. *Weaknesses of great leaders take the wildest growth in the hearts of millions* among their followers. Waterland says "Example comes in by the eyes and ears and slips in sensibly into the heart and so into the outward practice, by a kind of secret charm, transforming men's minds and manners into his own likeness." Hence human souls—weak as they are—feel great attraction for all such faiths and creeds which raise no voice against the private life of their votaries and concern with only beliefs.

When Lala Kashi Ram true to his *Guru* gave up the reformed rites for which the Brahmo Samaj stood, and took to idolatrous Hindu rites which Brahmo Samaj condemned in the strongest possible terms, Bhagwan took a strong exception to Lala's conduct. He wrote an editorial note in the columns of his organ, *Bradar-i-Hind*, dated May 1878 which has already been quoted by us in Part IV of this book.

But Bhagwan had no personal grudge against the Lala which Lala knew quite well. Bhagwan fought for principles and could never carry his opposition to personalities. He loved truth and stood by it against the world. He hated untruth and cared not for the consequences and as to who the partisans of the untruth were. But otherwise Bhagwan was always ready to help those who needed his help. Lala Kashi Ram was in trouble with his old community

people, because he did something unorthodox which his old community could not tolerate. Hence they determined to excommunicate him. Lala Kashi Ram was then at Simla. This threat of his community proved a sore trial for him. He felt himself alone and at that time he could see that Bhagwan, whom he had troubled and persecuted, was the one person who, in his hour of need, would prove a friend indeed. Hence he wrote to Bhagwan the following significant letter :—

“ Simla :

21st September, 1880.

My dear Pandit Shiv Narain,

You may have heard of the row my *Biradariwallas* (caste men) are making consequent upon my having eaten with Lala Ralla Ram. I am sure they will excommunicate me.....

May I ask whether you can receive my wife for a couple of days on my return to Lahore in the first week of October next ?

I am afraid I shall be put to a little inconvenience as I have got no servant at present, my old servant who came with me having already left my service.

If you could manage to rent a house for me somewhere near yours, and engage a male servant and a maid servant, I think I shall have no trouble whatever but this is not an easy matter.

I write this to you because I am almost certain that none of my Lahore friends will be in a position to give me shelter specially in these days when their whole community is in commotion.

Pray excuse trouble and favour me with a reply.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) KASHI RAM.”

(Italics are ours. Italicised portion is particularly significant.)

Bhagwan's most generous heart overflowed with a desire to help his fellow-man in the hour of his great trouble. Bhagwan wrote to him a letter full of consolation, and placed his own house at his disposal so long as he wished to avail himself of it. On receiving this reply from Bhagwan, Lala Kashi Ram wrote the following letter to him :—

“ Simla :

28th September, 1880.

My dear Pandit Shiv Narain,

Your kind letter of the 25th instant reached me duly. I cannot sufficiently thank you for your very generous help.

That is what I fully expected of you.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) KASHI RAM.’

This is how Bhagwan paid a man who belonged to the camp of his opponents and who had signalised his services to his party by ruthless persecution of Bhagwan.

Bhagwan, however, continued to carry on the work of his own society. The society made rapid progress. It started only with four members. In the very first year the members rose to eighteen consisting of nine local members and nine mufassil members. The Lahore members consisted among others of Babu Navin Chandra Roy, Mr. Shitla Kant Chatterjee, the then Editor of *Tribune* and Lala Girdhari Lal (afterwards Deputy Collector). The subjects of weekly lectures which Bhagwan delivered in that year, consisted of some of the following :—

(1) The Higher and Lower life. (2) The purity of life. (3) The new life. (4) Self-sacrifice. (5) The living religion. (6) Soul-light. (7) Soul-power. (8) Sin and its fruits, etc., etc.

When the members of the old Samaj of the Brahmos saw this rapid progress of the new Samaj and the stagnation to which their own Samaj had come, they made a move for amalgamation of the two Samajes into one. These efforts continued for several months. Bhagwan who was the life and soul of the new Samaj was always for harmony provided it could be had on higher principles. He therefore told the old Samaj people all about the points of difference. They agreed to remove all causes which stood in the way of unity. They did so and Bhagwan's Samaj also by a resolution agreed to the merging of both the parties into one. Thereafter Bhagwan again began his work there with the same zeal. This union came about in the month of May 1882.

III

MORE SICKENING REVELATIONS.

Some six months after the merging, Bhagwan Dev Atma resigned his Government service and embraced his unique life-vow in a great public meeting held on the 20th of December, 1882, in which besides others even the members of Nava Bidhan section were present. It was indeed sad that those among whom, and for whose highest good, Bhagwan worked so zealously, did not possess the capacity of seeing and realising those unique forces of higher life, which with time bloomed and blossomed more and more in Bhagwan's soul and which took toll of all kinds of self-surrender, and which developed unique spiritual or soul-light and power in him. These forces made Bhagwan lovingly earnest and restless in his unique mission of liberating fit souls from the grip of low-loves and low-hates and cultivating in their hearts altruistic or other-serving forces. Bhagwan's wholesale devotion to his unique vow impelled him to carry his light and power to others. There was strange activity visible all around. Even his own Samaj people felt the most elevating effects of Bhagwan's evangelising efforts in their own lives. They felt him charged with new power. Some developed the feeling of

reverence for Bhagwan's personality. But when Bhagwan worked in the public and put forth special efforts to change the hearts of his audience and made irresistible appeals to their souls, several persons were really transformed. Several new souls joined the fold of the Brahmo Samaj. This should have gladdened the hearts of all Brahmos. But there is an evil force called jealousy. It wants all praise for its possessor and all ill-will for those who commit the grave sin of rising higher and winning more glory than the jealous person. Hannahmore addresses it thus "A jealousy! thou ugliest fiend of hell! thy deadly venom preys upon my vitals, turns the healthful hue of my fresh cheek to haggard sallowness, and drinks my spirit up." Brahmo Samajists were not all immune from this fell malady. Those Nava Bidhanis specially, who had not forgotten Bhagwan's stern opposition to their *Guru's* step and his great exposure of their tactics in the matter of inviting Babu P.C. Muzumdar, could not view this growing influence of Bhagwan (which was all for the promotion of their society) with unconcern. The consuming fire of jealousy began to sear their hearts. Lala Kashi Ram took prominent part in traducing Bhagwan. On his intimation, the *New Dispensation*—an organ of Mr. Sen and of which he was himself the editor—published a note in its issue of the 5th August, 1883, in which many things intended to shock Bhagwan's heart were written. They were naturally untrue and false and as such did succeed in shocking Bhagwan's most sensitive heart. Bhagwan however wrote the following para and sent it all around to the Brahmos of Lahore, to say how far the statements contained in the scurrilous note were in consonance with facts and truth. Bhagwan's query was as under :—

"The *New Dispensation* of the 5th August, 1883, publishes a paragraph which please read below, under marks of quotation, and be kind enough to let me know whether it contains nothing but the truth and the whole truth about the Punjab Brahmo Samaj :—

'Lahore—Bhai Ganda Mal is now the *leading spirit* of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, and the **only** *active worker* in the Lord's vineyard in this great city. He needs reinforcement. Our Punjab brethren are *anxious to secure a resident missionary*. Who will offer his services?'

Lahore,
9th August, 1883.

Yours fraternally,
(Sd.) S. N. AGNIHOTRI."

The paragraph published in the *New Dispensation* was utterly false as we shall show by the testimony of L. Ganda Mal himself and other respectable members. In order to belittle Bhagwan this jealous man had no scruple in belittling himself, his Nava Bidhani friends and others by calling L. Ganda Mal as the *only active worker* in the so-called Lord's vineyard. But jealousy has that unfortunate effect on the mind of the jealous person. The jealous person would go to the extent of cutting his of nose only to spite his face.

Lala Ganda Mal wrote in reply :—

"I have read the last para, under the head of the Church News in the *New Dispensation* of 5th August, 1883.

"I sincerely declare that the writer of the para is grossly mistaken, and the facts are misrepresented.....I partly do the clerical work of the Samaj. As the clerical work does not form part of the real work of the Samaj, it is not worth mentioning.

"The Punjab Brahmo Samaj as a religious institution, is at present conducted by Brahmbadi S. N. Agnihotri. He is the life and soul of it. The self-sacrifice practised and interest taken by him in the cause of theism have prominently brought the Punjab Brahmo Samaj to the notice of the public. He is the centre and the people are attracted to him. Since he has commenced to work as minister, the congregation has greatly increased, and the institution has become more popular among the young men.

"Brahmbadi (S. N. Agnihotri) is doing a great deal for the regeneration of the country, by public lectures, discussions and sermons as well as by publishing tracts. The Punjab Brahmo Samaj has got a resident missionary in his person. It is rather difficult to get a more suitable and useful resident missionary than him from other provinces." (Italics all along are ours.)

Rai Bahadur Dr. Brij Lal Ghose wrote in reply as under :—

"I have read the *New Dispensation* note with surprise. The editor is misinformed.....We at present do not stand in need of a missionary as we have one who can ably manage....."

Lala Ram Chandra wrote :—

"In my opinion, Pandit S. N. Agnihotri is the leading spirit of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj. He takes greatest interest in its affairs.....I for one feel no necessity for a missionary as Pandit S. N. Agnihotri can supply our spiritual wants."

Wrote Pandit Gowardhan Das :—

"As far as my experience extends in connection with the affairs of the Samaj, I would emphatically say that the representation made in the *New Dispensation* on behalf of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj is far from being the fact.

"I am quite at a loss to conceive what good on earth can a foreigner do us, when one who has spent nearly the whole of his youth amidst us, forsaken his high position and adopted a purely religious life, one who is so able to express himself in our mother-tongue cannot do for the Lord's vine-yard.....Moreover I fear should a Bengalee missionary come up, the little fold of Brahmos that gather in the Mandir would most probably scatter away."

Wrote Lala Shardha Ram :—

"In my opinion, the writer of the para referred to is an enemy of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj. I for one do not know that any anxiety—either publicly or privately—has ever (since December 1882)

been expressed regarding securing a resident missionary. The para should be contradicted in one or two journals."

Lala Shardha Ram hit the nail right on its head when he said that the writer of the para was an enemy of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj. The jealous man cares not a fig who suffers, provided the object of jealousy is hit. Lala Kashi Ram's anxiety for Lord's vineyard was nothing more nor less than an anxiety to belittle Bhagwan even though that was calculated to harm that vine-yard itself.

Wrote Bhagwan in his story of his renunciation of the Brahmo Samaj, on this feature of Lala Kashi Rsm's behaviour, as under :—

"Though Lala Kashi Ram met with no success in his efforts to satisfy his jealousy and enmity, and his falsehood stood shamefully exposed in the eye of others ; and one of the old Brahmos being pained by his such mean state, called him an enemy of Brahmo Samaj, but he (L. Kashi Ram) could not change his nature.....He continued the same course of low conduct thereafter also."

Yes ! a man possessed by any feeling good or bad is helpless in its hands. As a leopard cannot change his spots or a wolf his habits in the same way, a jealous and vindictive man is not able by himself to shake of the baneful grip of these evil feelings over him. He might be defamed thereby. He might be exposed to ridicule and to just condemnation. He may make a bad name and go down to posterity as a wicked man. He may sometimes go behind prison bars and even to gallows. But all this would not change his evil habits. Among evil forces jealousy is one of the most potent and debasing as well as destructive force.

IV

EVENTS LEADING TO BHAGWAN'S RESIGNING THE MINISTRY OF BRAHMO SAMAJ.

A few months after the above incident, a conference was called to think over the ways and means for improving the condition of the Upper India Brahmo Samajes. It was to be held during Christmas holidays of 1883. It was attended by Lahore Brahmos and the representatives of five other Samajes. Bhagwan was elected the President of the conference and B. Navin Chandra Roy as its Secretary. As both of these highest office bearers of the conference did not belong to Nava Bidhan section, Lala Kashi Ram took an offence, even though it was being held for the improvement of the Brahmo Samaj. He was then out of Lahore. From that outstation he sent a wire objecting to the holding of the conference as it was not convened by any resolution of the General Committee. The fact was that all Lahore members without exception were regularly invited to take part in this conference. Those present in the conference ruled out his objection and thus Lala Kashi Ram once more failed in his object.

Continual defeats do sour the spirit of one in whose heart self is supreme and truth and goodness have no place. A lover of truth would thank any person if he is saved from even an unconscious falsehood. But a lover of self would simply shoot a man who thwarts him in the gratification of self or does anything however noble and right which is calculated to make him look small. How miserable is the lot of man whose heart does not awaken to the beauty of truth and goodness and who does not realise the path of falsehood and evil as absolutely dangerous path. For a man devoid of this light is bound to blunder, is bound to have recourse to falsehood and, since he has no legs to stand, is bound to fall and suffer humiliation.

Bhagwan was not only a unique orator of the Punjab but a unique personality whose heart forces were the wonderful loves of truth and goodness. Hence his words carried power. They issued charged with his light and power; and hence when they entered any soul they brought about wonderful transformation. But most of the people in Brahmo Samaj—ignorant of the fact that it is the force that produces a change, that higher force alone can produce higher change in hearts—believed that religion consisted of higher brain cell activity and was merely a cold and intellectual belief in a certain creed and hence anyone, who was able to speak, was fit to be a minister. This belief was natural to those who were themselves devoid of higher psychic forces and were ruled by low-hates. Hence L. Kashi Ram led an agitation that he and some others should also be allowed to occupy the pulpit. There was nothing unreasonable in the demand so far. But the venom lay in the insinuation made against Bhagwan that he was anxious to reserve to himself the exclusive right of occupying the Punjab Brahmo Samaj pulpit. He had a resolution passed in the month of July 1884, that besides Bhagwan three others including L. Kashi Ram and one other Nava Bidhani should also minister from the pulpit. The letter which L. Kashi Ram wrote to the Managing Committee contained the following false charge:—

“That he (S. N. Agnihotri) wants to reserve to himself the exclusive right of occupying the Punjab Brahmo Samaj pulpit.”

Bhagwan naturally took severe objection to this mean attack and wrote a letter in reply to L. Kashi Ram's charge, which very clearly explained his position and shed light on what Bhagwan considered the position of an *Acharya*. An extract from this letter is given below:—

“Certainly L. Kashi Ram does not mean to do justice to me, when he brings such an unfounded and damaging charge against me.

“As regards his motives, they are of course clear to me and to those who have carefully studied what he has been saying to others and writing about me, from time to time in the newspapers, of which the above-mentioned charge is a fresh example. He would even

try to injure the character of others if he can only thereby lower me in the eyes of the public. Did he not the other day publish in a paper that the young men who rose to accept the *Brahm Dharm* after hearing my sermons from the *Vedi*, had 'bolted away' while in fact they had not? Was not this a reflection upon their character and even on the position of the Brahmo Samaj?

"I would not lengthen my letter by giving further examples and thereby showing to you what he had been doing in connection with my ministry in the local Brahmo *Mandir*. Suffice it to say that if by speaking truth and nothing but truth regarding his motive L. Kashi Ram thinks, I am lowered considerably beneath the high position.....in the Brahmic world, then I gladly accept his verdict."

L. Kashi Ram's life will serve as an object lesson to those who in Bhagwan Dev Atma's light consider and feel low-hates as fatal soul-maladies. Every low-love and low-hate harboured by anybody takes that person to absurd extremes and exposes him to the ridicule and contempt of others. Bhagwan Dev Atma has done humanity the greatest possible good by revealing in his unique light the horrible nature of these low-loves and low-hates and the essential necessity for every soul to get free from their slavery. Had L. Kashi Ram received that light, he would have felt deeply horrified at his jealousy which did him no good but impelled him to do so many objectionable deeds in relation to the highest benefactor of humanity.

Continuing further in that letter, Bhagwan wrote :—

"I am sure you and other members of the Committee remember, that in a meeting held previous to one in which the above resolution was passed, I told you all that I never aspire for the ministership of The Punjab Brahmo Samaj and that I never requested the Samaj to appoint me as such. *The Punjab Brahmo Samaj yet seems far off from knowing and appreciating the true worth and position of a minister of religion.* Most of our friends hold and understand religion to be the mere cold and intellectual belief of a certain creed and to them any one can minister, if he only can speak something regarding their creed. Under such circumstances it is useless for me to speak on this subject at any great length. All that I explained in the meeting then and wish even now, is to get *at least a day* in a week *exclusively* for my ministration in the *mandir*—either in the name of 'regular minister' or any other. Up to this time, the Committee have allowed me to preach on Sunday evening. But if Sunday evening is so important that it cannot be allowed to me as it is particularly required by L. Kashi Ram for which he has been trying so hard, let him have it and glorify it, and let the Committee allow me some other day of the week for my exclusive use, as long as I remain in the station. If even this cannot be done, and if members think that by giving me Sunday or any other day exclusively for my ministration, there is *danger* of my ultimately getting hold of the *mandir*, like those

of the Nava Bidhani apostles of Calcutta, then dear brother, let this letter be accepted as *resignation* from my ministership, for I am not prepared either to hear such *insulting and mean suspicion* about me, or to say anything more in future in connection with this subject."

Lala Kashi Ram commenced a series of lectures in imitation of Bhagwan and he soon found to his dismay—if that word can correctly describe his disillusionment—that he had to speak to empty benches with the result that his meetings came to a natural full stop.

This behaviour of L. Kashi Ram and several of his Nava Bidhani friends had given Bhagwan a very sad experience of human nature. He used to believe even when he embraced his unique life mission and for some time thereafter, that every human soul was born with the germs of ever growing higher life and only required tending and nourishing to make it give up sins and develop virtues. He believed then that the seed of goodness was present in every soul and put into the rich soil of the so-called God and given the environments favourable for its growth, it was bound to grow into a vigorous growth and bring forth beautiful blossoms and sweet fruits of righteousness. This was the belief which the Brahmo Samaj held. But experience taught him that this was not the case. He saw before him cases of persons who professed faith in the so-called God, made long prayers to him, ostensibly passed off as great devotees of God and yet withered under the consuming fire of jealousy, vindictiveness, low hatred, falsehood, treachery and unrighteousness. God worship by itself brought no change in that sinful and wicked state of their heart. But he also saw that those who were attracted towards him, held him in reverence, and assimilated his highest psychic force, showed wonderful change of heart from the life of sin and corruption and grew noble and serviceable. Not only did such souls themselves feel blessed at the great change wrought in their lives, but even those among whom they lived and passed their time marvelled at the new turn which was given to their lives. Hence Bhagwan came gradually to realise the fact that people were incapable of opening their heart to and receiving inspiration from the so-called God, or goodness and truth present in the universe, as he found that they did through him. He realised that they were moved or moulded to better condition through the influences of his unique powers. For the propagation of his life-mission, he therefore found it imperative that those devoid of his powers and given to low-loves and low-hates, should come into such a mood as to receive his influences, since they could not benefit by maintaining hostile attitude. He therefore saw the futility of working as a minister of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj. A minister has to feed souls with higher influences. But in his society though several new souls made rapid progress, the old members, on the contrary, obstructed him in his ministry. Bhagwan writes about it in Part I of "My unique renunciations" :—

“Such people indeed were quite unfit to imbibe my higher influences who could feel no reverence, because of their low condition of heart, for any one who was really superior to them in life of religion, who were filled with the feeling of vindictiveness on finding a superior soul opposed to any of their evil courses of life, and whom they felt impelled to injure ; who burned with jealousy on seeing the greatness or superiority of a higher soul and goaded on by their low feelings, felt an impulse to prove harmful and troublesome to him ; and who in spite of their such degraded condition made merry over their evil ways and proudly gloated over them. Hence in the year 1885 when the Managing Committee of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, elected me as their *Acharya* or minister, I declined definitely the honour and wrote to the Secretary of the Samaj, the following letter embodying my reasons for it :—

Lahore,

1st December, 1885.

My dear Sir,

While I thank the Committee for unanimously electing me as a minister of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, I beg to state that I cannot accept the office for certain reasons and therefore respectfully beg to resign the same. Some of my reasons for doing so are as follows :—

(1) General want of that respect and regard for a superior, which a religious society ought to enjoin and enforce among its members.

(2) General want of recognition of the due importance of the spiritual life and fitness for the appointment of ministers.

(3) Bitter feelings and bickering spirit that prevail in the Samaj and cause fearful pains in the hearts of peace-loving members and by which not only the progress of the Samaj is checked but its cause and good influence is being entirely lost.”

Thereafter Bhagwan continued to remain only a member of the Samaj. Though on being specially required by them, he did sometimes go to minister to their spiritual needs in their *mandir* but otherwise Bhagwan devoted himself wholesale to his mission and did all work independently.

Lala Kashi Ram and several of his Nava Bidhani friends continued to injure Bhagwan's work. Some of them would sometimes go to the meanest extent of telling people who rushed to hear Bhagwan's lectures that the meeting that they were anxious to attend was over when in fact the truth lay the other way.

But these mean and low tactics at last culminated into a most sad and disgraceful act of behaviour of these New Dispensationists which compelled Bhagwan to ultimately resign even his ordinary membership of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj in 1886.

RESIGNATION OF HIS MEMBERSHIP OF THE PUNJAB BRAHMO SAMAJ.

We have said above that Bhagwan after declining the office of the minister of Punjab Brahmo Samaj, began the work of furthering the cause of his life mission independently and he held meetings in his own house also. The perusal of the columns of *Dharm Jiwan*—a paper conducted and owned by Bhagwan—shows what wonderful changes Bhagwan Dev Atma brought about in the lives of many souls. Out of these changed souls some offered their entire lives for the cause. They offered to be initiated into Brahmo Sannyas in order to devote all their energies for the Brahmo Samaj. Bhagwan felt that the ceremony of initiating two souls as Brahmo missionaries should in all fitness of things be performed in the most sacred place of the Samaj, *i.e.*, their *maudir*. Bhagwan required permission. Lala Kashi Ram, whose own life was absolutely barren in that line, could not bear to see such heartening triumphs of Bhagwan's power. Hence he raised an unmeaning opposition *against* the use of the building for even such a purpose. Bhagwan came to know of this. Hence though the Managing Committee overruled the senseless objection of Lala Kashi Ram, and thus vindicated Bhagwan's position, by granting him due permission he did not like under such circumstances to avail himself of it. He consequently performed that sacred ceremony in his own house. This ceremony took place on 17th April, 1886. Full report of this is published in the columns of *Dharm Jiwan* for 30th April, 1886.

Soon after an *Utsab* of the Brahmo Samaj took place, Lala Ganda Mal, who in the words of Lala Kashi Ram, was the "leading spirit" in the Brahmo Samaj and "the only active worker in the Lord's vineyard (?) " and who therefore should have been respected by the Lala himself if his (Lala's) opinion had been honest and not expressed merely to belittle Bhagwan, requested Bhagwan Dev Atma to deliver a lecture. Bhagwan accepted the request. His lecture was announced for 24th April, 1886, only a week after the ceremony of initiation of two souls as missionaries which the Lala had tried to obstruct. The defeat was too fresh. His heart seemed not to have recovered from the sense of disappointment. This invitation or request made to Bhagwan by the Secretary for the favour of a lecture chilled his heart and he bestirred himself to thwart Bhagwan here. Direct appeal to the Secretary or the Managing Committee or even to the trustees to get the invitation to Bhagwan withdrawn, would, as Lala knew, have met with a sorry fate which it deserved. Hence he and some of his Nava Bidhani friends hit upon a novel plan of taking the law into their own hands and of forcibly capturing the pulpit on that date and hour when the lecture of Bhagwan was announced. Would not these Nava Bidhanis be considered as true to their great *Guru* Babu K. C. Sen who in spite of the fact that he was deposed from the office of a minister refused to hand over the

mandir to the Brahmos and took forcible possession of it with the help of a police officer who belonged to his party? Lala Kashi Ram tore off the printed notice announcing Bhagwan's lecture placed on the Samaj Board and pasted instead a hand-written notice that at the time when Bhagwan's lecture was to take place a *Sat Sang* (?) would be held by him and his party. The news spread like a wildfire in the city that a row was expected to take place in the peaceful precincts of the Brahmo *mandir*. People thronged there to see the *tamasha*. Lala Kashi Ram accompanied by L. Ralla Ram and L. Ramji Dass reached the place and told the Secretary in his face that they would not allow the lecture to be held there and that they would hold *Sat Sang* meeting. The poor Secretary protested in vain. Many from the public said that they had come there because they had read a printed notice that Bhagwan was to deliver a lecture and they would like to hear him. But Lala Kashi Ram was so badly possessed by the unfortunate feeling of jealousy against Bhagwan that he lost sight of the fact that he was injuring the reputation of the Brahmo Samaj and exposing his society and theism to public ridicule. But how could he change his nature? God of theists is worse than a cipher. The only light that could have shown him the horror of his low-hate could come to him from Bhagwan whom he hated. Hence his case was hopeless and hopeless it did prove.

As soon as Bhagwan came to know of the disgraceful scenes that were being enacted in the *mandir*, he wrote a letter to the Secretary expressing his inability to deliver the lecture under those circumstances and his regrets to those who had assembled to hear him. This letter was read to the audience. This fanned the flame of fury of Lala Kashi Ram still more and he burst into use of abusive and disgraceful epithets against Bhagwan. The rowdy element in the public at once took up the inspiration and committed dreadful scenes. They broke lamps and benches and created such noise and tumult, that it converted the Brahmo Mandir to worse place than a fish market. Lala Kashi Ram was repeatedly asked to leave the *mandir* by the Secretary and two trustees who were present. But he kept to his unholy plan up to 11 p. m. and must have, that night in his solitude, demanded of his Brahmo God to pat him on back for his signal services to him.

How his own co-religionists felt all this can be seen from the following words of Lala Ganda Mal, the Secretary, which are culled from his report :—

“ In short such a bad impression was caused among the people by the conduct of Lala Kashi Ram, Lala Ralla Ram Bhimbhat and others that what was done during the space of twenty-five years, was undone in a day. No outsider was seen at engagements of the *Utsab*, although hundreds of gentlemen were invited directly or indirectly. *Brahmo Dharm* was greatly lowered in the estimation of the people, perpetrators of the unseemly scenes were taunted for their high

profession of *Brahmo Dharm* and reproached as hypocrites and dissemblers by Brahmos and others."

At first the trustees of the *mandir* held a meeting to consider over the reprehensible behaviour of these men, and in pursuance of their resolution a Managing Committee meeting was held to consider the unpleasant situation caused by these Brahmos. After mature deliberations they passed the following resolution :—

"That the *conduct of L. Kashi Ram and L. Ramji Dass* in bringing about, and that of *Lala Ralla Ram Bhimbhat* in abetting the proceedings which led to the unseemly scene of the 24th April, 1886, *was in the opinion of the Committee of Management scandalous and reprehensible* and the Committee recommended that the above members should apologise (within two weeks) publicly for their conduct which had caused the disgraceful scenes unheard of in the history of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj."

No apology was tendered by *Lala Kashi Ram* and his companions within two weeks. Hence in their meeting of 21st May, 1886, the Managing Committee unanimously passed a resolution that, with the sanction of the General Committee, *Lala Kashi Ram and Lala Ralla Ram* may be dismissed from the membership of the Managing Committee and that they should not hold any office in the Samaj till they underwent sufficient punishment for their evil doings, and that *L. Ramji Dass* be expelled from the membership of the Brahmo Samaj. What happened thereafter is known only to Brahmos, as *Bhagwan* took no interest in the affairs of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj since then.

The resignation of *Bhagwan Dev Atma* from the membership of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj was felt as the greatest loss by most of the Brahmos. It was he who had, more than any one else, made the Brahmo Samaj a living and growing society in the Punjab. Through his most zealous and creative activities the society had eventually gathered force which was felt all over the Punjab. His separation was therefore keenly felt by the Samaj and a deputation consisting of the eleven members of the Managing Committee of Brahmo Samaj, Lahore waited on *Bhagwan* on Sunday, the 30th January, 1887 at his residence with the object of requesting *Bhagwan* not to discontinue his lectures which he used to deliver in the Brahmo Samaj Mandir and thus work as their minister. *Bhagwan* told them in the plainest possible terms that when free he would have no objection to go to their *mandir* as a private person and to deliver an address when invited provided none of them caused any obstruction in the meeting or interference in his life-mission.

Says *Bhagwan* :—

"At last after twelve years of very bitter experience (which includes my experience for eight years of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj), I was convinced beyond the very shadow of doubt :—

1. That the Brahmo Samaj people had neither *any knowledge of what real higher life is*, nor had they any *true higher ideal* before them; both of which it was my mission to cultivate in fit souls.

2. That like several other societies, the Brahmo Samaj was also one such sect, in which men holding even very high offices did not scruple at times from having recourse to injustice and untruth to serve their own interests.

3. That my higher influences could not produce or develop higher life in the general run of the Brahmo Samaj people, because of the love of self and various other low-loves which generally ruled their hearts on the one hand, and the consuming feelings of jealousy and vindictiveness against me which many of them possessed on the other, and that the whole of my ministration fell absolutely flat on such souls.

4. That some among the members offered a positive hindrance to the furtherance of my life mission."

All this compelled Bhagwan to submit his resignation in writing to the Samaj on 1st November, 1887.

Even after Bhagwan left the Punjab Brahmo Samaj altogether and cut of all his connection even with Sadharan Brahmo Samaj (of which we shall speak soon), L. Kashi Ram was ruled by that same unfortunate feeling. His was an abnormal type of jealousy which is bound to be an eye-opener to those awakened to the horrors of this extremely low feeling. It sometimes took the Lala to childish extremes. And sad to say he was all the time unaware of its fatal grip on his intellect and body since he lived in soul darkness.

Years after, heading a party of Brahmos, he embarked on a *Nagar Kirtan* in the Anarkali Bazaar of Lahore. The Lala brought the party purposely in front of Dev Ashram—the then headquarters of the Dev Samaj, where Bhagwan Dev Atma lived. Lala Kashi Ram made the whole party of theists to stop a harmless song which they were already singing, and moved by the dreadful maladies of jealousy and hatred he began to sing a song which began thus :—

Har na bhajen tin ke mukh kare.

Translated into English it reads : "Black are the faces of those who do not recite the name of God." He repeated this stanza again and again to soothe his theistic heart without realising the fact that he was making a puerile display. All infants born all over the world never recite the name of God as they cannot. Are they all black in face? European, Pathan and Kashmiri children specially have and had decidedly far more beautiful faces than that of L. Kashi Ram himself, who gloated in repeating that name which seems never to have influenced at least his heart. Was he unaware of the fact that millions of Bengalee, Madrasi, and Negro theists have very dark faces in spite of all their repetition of the name of God? It would have been on the contrary perfectly true if L. Kashi Ram had sung :—

Harī ko bhajen lakhon hatiare

meaning, God's name is recited by lacs of such persons who are wicked, i. e. who are either butchers or murderers, robbers or dacoits, mean and corrupt in money matters, abductors and kidnappers, traffickers in white or other women, slave traders, infanticides and tyrants, so on and so forth.

This childish exhibition of a very contemptible feeling showed his spirit of bigotry or intolerance to those who held different views. This spirit became pronounced in the New Dispensationists. It is said that a New Dispensationist at Calcutta, to vent his spleen, actually shot an arrow at the Prayer Hall of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, as if to end its existence, and this he did when these theistic devotees of the *New Dispensation* were passing in a procession singing the glory of their God and his wonderful dispensation, sent to the world through L. Kashi Ram's *Guru*, Babu K. C. Sen, though that Mahatma had been declared unfit to remain the Secretary and minister of the Brahmo Samaj by a majority of the Brahmos for his unbrahmic conduct and doings. Well, if love of God bubbling in the heart of these New Dispensationists could not spare dead buildings belonging to the Brahmo Samaj itself from their impotent wrath—as an arrow could in fact do no harm to a *pucca* house—one can understand this poor display made by L. Kashi Ram in our relation. In the circle of the *New Dispensation* itself cases have taken place, when a missionary of that new fashioned faith cut off the water-pipe of other fellow missionaries of the same faith, so that they may not be able to get water for drinking purposes. It is therefore not surprising if L. Kashi Ram was betrayed by this New Dispensationist spirit to glorify the name of his God by going deliberately to the very house of a non-Dispensationist and abusing him there.

Lala Kashi Ram ended his theistic career on this earth by one more shot aimed at Bhagwan, by reading in a public meeting at Ferozepore, a paper about Bhagwan and his mission in which he even surpassed himself by concocting series of lies and scandals against Bhagwan. A reply to that was published by our society at first in our English monthly and then in a pamphlet form under the title of "Lala Kashi Ram and his theistic propaganda."

VI

BHAGWAN'S CONNECTION WITH THE SADHARAN
BRAHMO SAMAJ AND HOW IT ENDED.

Sadharan Brahmo Samaj was founded in the month of May 1878, in Calcutta. In the very same year, Bhagwan joined it as a member. In the month of January 1880, the Samaj initiated Bhagwan with his consent, as a regular missionary in a very large and representative meeting held on the occasion of its *Utsab*. In the same year Bhagwan was appointed as one of the trustees of its *mandir* in Calcutta. The three gentlemen who were also initiated as missionaries along with Bhagwan were :—(1) Pandit Shiv Nath

Shastri, M. A., (2) Pandit Bijoy Krishna Goswami. (3) Pandit Ram Kumar Vidya Ratan. Like Bhagwan all these three missionaries had their families. All these other three missionaries received honorariums from the Samaj for their maintenance. Bhagwan was serving in those days in the Government High School, Lahore and had, therefore, no need of any help from any society. Even after 1882 when Bhagwan gave up his Government service and took up his unique Life-Vow, *he never took or wished to take any help from any society for his own personal needs or the needs of his family*. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma in Part I of his *Unique Renunciation*:—

“In the beginning, the Punjab Brahmo Samaj people had even offered me to accept maintenance allowance from them. But I had told them that though I could accept some help from any one who offered it if I deemed that right and proper, yet I could not fulfil my *unique life mission* if I lived a life of dependence on any man or society by agreeing to receive any fixed *monthly* honorarium. I could not do so hence I had to resign my Government job because Hence even after giving up my service I remained an *honorary missionary* of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.”

Though Bhagwan believed, in those days in the fundamental canons of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj; yet he was a progressive soul. His own unique powers were evolving. Hence if in his growing light, he saw something as right, he accepted it and propagated it. He applied his higher powers for the reclamation of souls, working according to his own light. However, as rules required, Bhagwan sent the quarterly report of his work to the Managing Committee of this Samaj without fail and punctually, and a summary of it was placed before the General Committee along with that of the reports of the other missionaries. From amongst all the leading members of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Bhagwan had some close relationship only with Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri who often wrote to Bhagwan.

Now Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, like all other various so-called religious societies, was based on mere belief in some religious creed. Anyone could become its member by conforming to three things, *viz.*, a belief in its principles, an ordinary innocent life, *i.e.*, not particularly wicked or objectionable life, and the payment of some annual subscription. All the members had equal right of vote. These members elected forty persons out of themselves to form a General Committee. Out of these forty, a Managing Committee consisting of twelve elected members was formed. Some members of the Managing Committee and even some of the missionaries took flesh and also used one or the other intoxicant. They believed religion to consist in repeating certain formulæ of praises of and prayers to a person called “God” and singing some songs or devotional hymns. They had no conception of the kind of higher life, the propagation of which was the life mission of Bhagwan. Very naturally therefore, they could neither see nor appreciate the grandeur of Bhagwan’s work.

Bhagwan writes in the chapter about his renunciation of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj in the same Book :—

“ Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri had somewhat deeper regard for me than hundreds of other Brahmos. He also felt that in that society there were laymen who had better life than some of its missionaries. That being so, the constitution of the society could not be based on higher life. It was founded only on the model of various political bodies and hence the rules about voting and election were framed in accordance with those prevalent in such political bodies. Being based on the model of political societies this constitution could lead only to the following two alternatives. Firstly, that the differences of opinion, in various matters specially in religious beliefs—in such a Samaj, should lead to bickerings and hostilities, mutual jealousies and spirit of revenge among its members culminating in false charges being brought up against each other, in loss of reverence among the members of the generally civilized section for the preachers of the Samaj; division of the members of the Samaj into hostile parties, thus lowering the moral power (whatever it was) of the society: or secondly, that those who might not wish to remain in such harmful influences should part company with the society altogether.”

After some years' experience, Bhagwan came to realise that such a constitution of the Samaj was not religious. Bhagwan opened his heart to Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri who wrote in reply in his letter dated 21st September, 1884 thus :—

“ I too feel as keenly as you, the necessity for a new organisation for the Samaj.”

When after some years the above evil effects of this political constitution began to show themselves, Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri wrote the following letter to Bhagwan :—

“ Calcutta,
10th May, 1886.

My dear Agnihotri,

I received your letter a few days ago. I had to go out of town that very day and asked Nawadwip Babu to communicate to you our decision. I am extremely anxious to get away from town, but we expect some serious troubles, which may keep us down here.

These are the facts. For some time past, Bijoy Babu (a missionary of the Sadharan Samaj—*Compiler*) has begun to secretly teach some sorts of process of *yoga* and teach many other things along with it. For instance, it is a rule with those who accept this process, not to take things from the same vessel with another. Secondly the process is carried on in strict privacy.

The names of *Radha* and *Krishna*, that have done so much mischief to country are freely used by Bijoy Babu and his followers.....

These and similar proceedings have roused up a strong feeling of opposition amongst our members, so much so that there is apprehension of a rupture.

Yours sincerely,
Shiva Nath."

Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote a letter to him in reply, a portion of which is given below :—

" Lahore,
15th May, 1886.

My dear Shiva Nath,

Thanks for your letter of the 10th instant. I am sorry to learn that you 'expect serious troubles' in the church at Calcutta.

I am not surprised at it. The constitution of our Church is so defective and it is unfortunately based on such a wrong basis, that it has in it the seed of rupture.....We will learn by the experience of this kind and thus see our defects, and then improve our constitution and make it a *spiritual* one instead of one similar to political associations as it is at present."

But the world history has proved it beyond a shadow of doubt that *no society based only on certain beliefs can have a spiritual constitution based on higher life.*

Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri had some time before that published an article in the columns of the *Indian Messenger* in which he had laid down that it was open to every Brahmo to accept, whatever teachings he might, in his own opinion, think as right in the Vaishnava creed of Chetanaya or Christian philosophy of Paul. And yet his own Samajic people raised a hurricane blast of opposition against Bijoy Babu. Pandit Shiva Nath had perhaps lost sight of that temper of his fellow believers which could ill-brook such a liberty of belief. Bijoy Babu was accordingly expelled from the Samaj.

Bijoy Babu was a very old missionary of the Brahmo Samaj and had rendered very good services to the Samaj. His heart hungered for light of religion and he was anxious to find any way to it. God of heavens showed him nothing. He therefore felt a great necessity for the help of a human guide. He did not know much of English language. But he was a great scholar of Sanskrit. He had read much in Sanskrit literature about the miracles of *yoga*. He therefore felt the necessity of some *Guru* to initiate him into its mysteries. Some years after, Pandit Ram Kumar Vidya Ratan also got dissatisfied with himself and felt the need of some light. Not getting it directly from the so-called Lord of the heavens and earth, he also left the Brahmo Samaj and adopted Hindu Sannyasin life.

In 1886, Bhagwan had himself realised the truth that as man is incapable of removing the darkness of night by addressing a prayer to God, or imparting light of education to his son by any amount of

appeals to God, and that in both cases he was bound to have recourse in the first case to lamp-light to dispel physical darkness and in the second case to a teacher to remove intellectual darkness; in the same way, no man, being himself devoid of the various higher forces and at the same time a slave to low-loves and low-hates, could get liberty from their degrading bondage and develop higher forces of higher character by any amount of worship of God in any form, without receiving the highest psychic influences of one possessed of the love of truth and goodness and repulsion for all untruth and wrong. Boldly and frankly did Bhagwan Dev Atma preach the necessity of a true spiritual guide that very year. Higher change, from life of sin and corruption to life of purity and higher service, Bhagwan called *new life* or *Nava Jiwan*. He saw that so far as this new or true higher life was concerned, not only the ordinary Brahmos, but several members of the Managing Committee were devoid of it. It was therefore anomalous that such people should stand as guides of one who not only possessed unique life but produced marvellous changes in the hearts of many. Bhagwan Dev Atma was anxious to bring about a change in the constitution of the Brahmo Samaj from that of the political one to a truly spiritual one. But his co-religionists could not see all this and hence were incapable of understanding the position of Bhagwan. Bhagwan writes in Part I of his "Unique Renunciations" already referred to:—

"Even the mutual relation of the missionaries was not based on spiritual life. Various members of the Samaj also did not cherish any feeling of reverence for them. Even the attitude of the Managing Committee towards those who, unlike me, were its paid missionaries was peculiar. Hence in absence of the spiritual basis of its constitution, there existed ill-will to a great extent in the whole of the Samaj. I felt greatly *pained* at all this pitiful state. I used to write to Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri in this connection. To one of my such letters, Pandit Shiva Nath replied among other things as under:—

' Calcutta :

14th October, 1886.

My dear Agnihotri,

Please excuse me for not being able to answer your last letter before this. I see you are thinking very seriously upon the present state of our Church. I cannot tell you how much I feel myself weighed down by anxiety.

The whole body is *without organisation*, the few missionaries we have, are not bound up together by ties of friendship, the relation between the members and the missionaries is not what it should be, the missionaries are not sufficiently respectful to the members of the Committee, who have executive control over the affairs of the whole Church. The whole body is split up into a number of mutually conflicting parties, differing from each other materially, in point of faith and spiritual discipline: serious

differences of opinion are arising in the body and no effort is being made to keep together all these discordant elements."

This letter clearly shows that Bhagwan was completely right in his opinion about the regrettable condition that prevailed in the society.

After some time Bhagwan read in the columns of *Tattwa Kaumudi* the whole account of the report made by the sub-committee appointed to enquire into the case of Bijoy Babu along with the resolution passed thereon by the Managing Committee. Bhagwan read all that with deep pain, as he found that the charges framed against him and conclusions arrived at therein were not, in many points, a fair representation and just adjudication of Bijoy Babu's case. Though Bhagwan did not agree with Bijoy Babu in several matters, he however found that he himself believed in some of his opinions to which exception had been taken by the Committee. He could not therefore remain silent. His love of truth and justice impelled him to write a long letter to Bijoy Babu embodying his own feelings and opinions. He sent a copy of the same to the Managing Committee. The letter ran as under :—

"Lahore,

17th June, 1886.

My dear and revered brother,

I have read carefully and with deep regret the whole account published in the last issue of '*Tattwa Kaumudi*' regarding your resignation, and the report of the sub-committee appointed by the Managing Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj to make an enquiry about it and the decision of the Committee thereon.

"To me the whole affair is most deplorable. I was prepared of course to see your resignation in the hands of the Committee, considering the circumstances under which you had to work lately, but I was little prepared to see the kind of report made by the sub-committee and the decision of the Committee thereon.

"I am sorry to find that the resolution of the Managing Committee embodies the charges preferred against you in the spirit and words, which in my opinion do not carry *exact* sense of your belief and principles, as stated in your letter of resignation and the report of the sub-committee."

After showing the grave errors of some of his beliefs and teachings about Radha and Krishna, Bhagwan wrote to him in the same letter :—

"Then there are a few other minor points which I do not approve, for instance, your prohibiting the use of flesh and allowing the use of fish at the same time.

"Excepting these, I beg to state that I do agree in *spirit*, though not entirely in form, with those teachings of yours, which have been condemned in strong terms by the entire body of the Managing Committee. I would have considered myself *wanting in*

moral courage and love of truth, had I kept silent over the matter and not raised my voice in your support.....They do not seem as yet to comprehend the meaning of the growth of life in soul, or else how could they dare to put a limit to the knowledge about it and virtually say (as illustrated in the nature of the enquiry into your case) 'so far and no further.'

"What they do not know and have no experience of in their soul, they call *superstitions and mischievous*.

"To them religion is nothing but a *bundle of opinions* which they profess to hold and nothing beyond it.....

"It is all very well to say that ours is a universal church, but where exist those practical conditions and grounds for such a belief? Then is it not true that (1) the relation of the teachers or missionaries with that of the church is not yet settled, (2) the true way to and nature of salvation and sanctification still remains undefined, (3) the missionary body is not yet organised, (4) spiritual and moral discipline in the church have not as yet come in vogue, (5) forms of ceremonies have not yet been settled, and under these conditions, if our good Managing Committee do not understand their own position as well as that of the church and act in a manner as they have done in the present case, they only prove themselves wanting in *foresight and large-heartedness*."

Bhagwan concluded the letter with the following pregnant words :—

"You have gone out first although I expected to go away first. But if no proper and necessary change takes place in the condition of the members that compose the Managing Committee, then the time seems not far distant, when I and perhaps others shall be obliged to follow your suit."

When the copy of this letter was received by the Managing Committee, they naturally felt indignant. Again the rules which they proposed to frame for the guidance of the missionaries were in several points fundamentally wrong and hence Bhagwan strongly disapproved of them, at which too the Committee expressed its resentment. Bhagwan was not alone in his disapproval. He was only bold and frank. Babu Nagindra Nath Chatterjee was also displeased with the new rules. On the 30th July, 1886, he wrote the following letter to Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

"My dear Agnihotri,

You must write a crushing criticism to the proposed rules for the guidance of the missionaries. I know your voice is felt in the Committee.

"I will, of course, send my ideas about the rules to the Committee as soon as possible. The Brahmo Samaj is in a crisis. We must do our duty to the church."

Bhagwan always did his duty fearlessly. His voice, as Mr. Chatterjee rightly remarked, was felt in the Committee. He

could not approve of a political constitution for a religious society. He felt it an anomaly that a man possessing no religious life should become a member of the Managing Committee merely on account of his worldly position and be a guide of those who had a better life than he ever possessed. Bhagwan exposed this defective constitution without any fear or care of consequences. Those at the head, whose unfitness to be on the Managing Committee, Bhagwan exposed, did not tamely accept this truth about them but resented it vehemently. As belief in some stereotyped principles of Samaj formed the chief creed and qualification of a member, there was no tolerance in the Samaj for anything that any truly higher soul did, but which did not altogether conform to those cold intellectual opinions. Bhagwan's unique activities which he put forth in the growing light of his own progressive soul, excited great comment in the circle of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Several members, who found the Bhagwan's views something foreign to their nature and experiences developed strong antipathy to him. Some time before this, some of them had objected to Bhagwan's independence of views. Knowing this Bhagwan had written a very important letter to Pandit Shiv Nath Shastri which embodied the true spirit of Bhagwan and which (with the change of a word here or there) ran as under :—

“Lahore,

18th September, 1885.

Allow me to tell you frankly that I feel I am not born to be led by others, but I am born to lead others and rule them. This you may consider my self-arrogance but I do not feel like it.....

“I have stood by my own conviction and by my own light in the past and I mean to do the same in future.....Whenever I do anything or take any new step in my life, *I do so with my inner consciousness that my heart is right*, and I never count whether that step will be approved of by any man, or class of men, or by my own fellow-believers or others.

“This is a characteristic of my life and I cannot be untrue to it. Yes, it is a spiritual death to me, should I turn out a traitor to my inner light.”

Most of the Brahmos took these words as exhibiting a spirit of arrogance in Bhagwan. Some others may also interpret these words in the same mistaken way. Statement of a fact honestly felt is no vanity. Falsely presuming something or some virtue to be present in one, when it is not actually present can be called presumptive arrogance or vanity. It can never be vanity for a man to feel superior to animals. In the English history William Pitt, Earl of Chatham is praised for the heroic self-confidence when he said that he alone could save England and that none else could do so. He proved this claim by actual deeds. All high religious characters have made a claim that they are the ships of safety for the foundering souls. Bhagwan Dev Atma proved during his long life on this planet that in reality he was a born leader and

ruler of hearts. Throughout his unique course of life, he invariably took the lead from his inner light and not from men or combination of men. Even as a Brahmo, he moulded his life after his own light. Whatever religious exercises he did, whatever truths or higher principles of higher life he discovered and propagated through press and platform, whatever books he wrote or sermons he delivered, in all these he followed the wake of his light. He did send his quarterly report to the Committee as rules required. He wished deeply and well for the growth of the Samaj. But he did all his work quite independently and did not take inspiration or light for his work or ministration from Samaj or its Committee.

Bhagwan maintained this nominal relation with Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta for some time. But when his convictions grew deeper and firmer that this Samaj too, like several other theistic denominations, was simply creed-based and its constitution simply a political constitution and not a religious one, that instead of proving a help to Bhagwan in his unique mission, it stood as an impediment, and that like some Nava Bidhani Brahmos its several members and leaders also had recourse to untruth at the hour of emergency, Bhagwan determined to cut off even that nominal connection, which he did by a letter of resignation. This letter Bhagwan sent to the Secretary of Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta in the end of the year 1887. That memorable letter runs as under :—

“ Dear Sir,

In 1880 while I was in Calcutta, I was requested on behalf of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj to enlist myself as a missionary of the Samaj. Seeing nothing wrong either in the request or any interference in my independent career, I accepted the office, though I seldom used this designation in connection with my work. And since then though apparently connected with the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj yet my connection has been practically nominal only, excepting that I sent to you my quarterly reports of the work, which I have been doing in my own way.....

“ But as after a pretty long experience, I do not see, on the one hand, any considerable good in keeping this my nominal connection with you, and on the other, I do not approve of the present *constitution* of the Samaj, and also the treatment which I receive at the hands of the Executive Committee, I have decided to give up this nominal connection also, and therefore request the favour of your accepting this letter as my resignation.”

The ordinary etiquette required that Bhagwan should have been given intimation of the resolution of the Committee, passed by them on this letter. But this was not done. The letter of resignation of Bhagwan was never published. Only an ordinary resolution of the Committee was published in their paper, the *Indian Messenger* with a note which bristles with lies from the top to the bottom. That note ran as under :—

“He considers the majority of Brahmos to be unsaved men, in the salvationist sense of the term, which has recently struck his fancy ; and hence he is not willing to be identified with those men.”

It is probable that this note was written by Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri. If our reasonable guess be correct, this becomes still more inexplicable in the face of the most stern facts which formed the subject of correspondence between Pandit Shastri and Bhagwan as stated above and which Mr. Shastri intimately and too well knew.

Again, salvationists consider that person as ‘saved’ from eternal hell, who believes that Jesus suffered crucifixion as a penance for the sins of all sinners, and hence he (Jesus) secured a direct way to heavens for those who believed in him and his such sacrifice. Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri specially and other Brahmos generally knew quite well that never in his life did Bhagwan cherish such a belief. If in spite of this the writer had the hardihood to write such a note, it only corroborates and confirms conclusively Bhagwan’s bitter experience that even the leading Sadharan Brahmo Samaj people did not scruple to resort to falsehood when the occasion demanded, and their perennial inspiration from so-called good God was a pure myth. Had these people possessed even an ordinary sense of fairness, which we expect from any gentleman, they should have published the letter of resignation which contained the true reasons given by Bhagwan. And if they did not consider Bhagwan’s reasons to be correct, they should have had courage to contradict them. But it was not fair to concoct false reasons and to attribute motives which to their own personal knowledge, were far from being facts and which were at once contradicted by Bhagwan through a letter.

It was impossible for a lover of truth, as Bhagwan was, to put up with such a society for all times. He was born to accomplish a unique mission and not to please people or win some popular name and fame. Hence he needed some suitable vehicle for the carrying out of his unique mission which could help and not hinder him in his unique work. Founding of the Dev Samaj therefore was a very natural and unique fruit of his unique life.

VII

THE FOUNDING OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma knew and realised higher life as a stern fact and not an unattainable ideal. He felt that a mere belief in God or all such worship of Him, as brought about no change in the sinful life of the worshipper, was nothing short of a mockery. The following free translation of a brief note which appeared in *Dharam Jiwan* for 13th March, 1887, illustrates to some extent Bhagwan’s attitude towards real religious life. It was the summary of a sermon which he delivered in Brahmo Samaj Mandir at their request on the 27th February, 1887. It ran as under:—

"No one attains to new life or the most heavenly blessings of true spiritual life merely by:—(1) A belief or disbelief in any creed or a founder of a creed, or prophet, or this or that religious book; (2) An observance of religious or social rites, ceremonies and customs; (3) Keeping up certain outward forms or undergoing any unnecessary physical privations; (4) Practising any religious exercise to create outward and temporary enthusiasm or raptures or a passing for a mere gentleman.

"I wonder that in this 19th century when people talk loudly of the necessity of reason, they do not apply that very reason or rationality in spiritual matters, (*i.e.*, good or evil life). When soul is present in man and it does not live a life according to the spiritual and moral laws of Nature, how is it possible for it to make any progress towards higher spiritual life so long it undergoes no radical change in its evil courses of life and is not liberated from them..... In absence of this change or freedom from evil life, all his belief in this or that creed, or any prophet, Founder, Rishi, a sacred book or religious ceremonies or physical austerities, etc., or even in God is a sheer mockery. This life of mockery helps forward and does not stop life of sin and corruption. I fail to understand why those who have really no desire for this freedom from the life of sin, degrade God-worship and religion by their lip profession? Why do they not decide at once that either they will find ways and means to get freedom from the lower life and attain new higher life, or give up all outward professions of belief in God or any creed or any religious denomination? If these men have any respect for honesty and consistency, they must accept one or the other alternative."

This was the spirit which permeated the entire life of Bhagwan Dev Atma. He was out to change the hearts of men from evil courses and thus not only to make their daily life inoffensive to others but positively pure and serviceable.

As Bhagwan had found out by experience that the Punjab Brahmo Samaj and also the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of India not only did not come up to his standard and fell far below his ideals and aspirations, but proved also a hindrance in his work and progress; he had practically renounced them both long before he had put in formal resignations. And in order to carry on the work of his unique life-mission unhampered, he unfurled the standard of *Dev Dharm* and founded the society of Dev Samaj on the 16th February, 1887. The reasons which led Bhagwan Dev Atma to found Dev Samaj, we quote below from his memorable autobiography, *Mujh men Dev Jiwan ka Vikas*, Part I, pages 141-143:—

"The unique higher life, that was unfolding in my soul and the gospel of the new life which I was propagating, struck not only the people of other creeds as uncommon, but it appeared something novel even to the members of the Brahmo Samaj. Hence my sermons on (1) the consciousness of sin, (2) the freedom from sinful life, (3) the new life, (4) the life of immortality, etc., appeared

to them (excepting to a few of my disciples) as inexplicable puzzles. As a crow is not able to understand the language of a swan, in the same way, the Brahmos felt themselves unable to comprehend me. They not only felt no need at all of a Spiritual Guide possessing the highest psychic forces, who could, on the one hand, bring a higher change in such souls, as were devoid of any realisation of sin or rather loved sin, and who were dominated by low ideals and worldly or sensual lives; and, on the other, evolve in them new higher and noble life; but, when on my becoming conscious of this truth, I began to preach the need for such a saviour, they considered such teachings as pernicious and harmful. Hence instead of getting nearer to me, they went farther and farther away. Not only did they themselves not profit by my ministrations but they offered positive hostility and hindrance to the furtherance of my life mission. I continued to work even under these unfavourable conditions for a pretty long time, but when it became impossible for me to work with them any longer, I proclaimed the *Dev Dharm* in a special ceremony held in my own sanctuary in my house on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the late Queen and Empress Victoria, and unfurled a new flag as an outward symbol for its victory."

A brief note about this momentous ceremony was published in the columns of *Dharm Jiwan* for 20th February, 1887, the substance of which appeared in the *Science-Grounded Religion* for September, 1909 as under:—

"On the 16th February, 1887, i.e., 6th Phalgun 1943 B., the day of Golden Jubilee of Her late Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria's fifty years' reign, when the whole of India was resounding with rejoicings and which day would be considered as especially auspicious day, not only in the history of this land but in that of the whole world, Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan performed an important ceremony in his sanctuary with a small band of his followers, wherein he proclaimed his *Dev Dharm* mission, the mission of imparting his own life of *Devat*, that he thought his God had commissioned him with, to those who would unite with and follow him; and hoisted a flag as an emblem of his *Dev Dharm* mission. A white flag bearing the words "**Dev Dharm**" in letters cut out of red cloth was put on a long staff, and this flag was afterwards hoisted on the top of his mission office. Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan was then living in the upper storey of a house which he had taken on rent. It was situated to the eastern side of the Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore, near Brahma Mandir. A portion of a room of this house was separated by a curtain from the rest and was set apart for daily devotional exercises and addresses. He delivered inspiring addresses to his followers and performed important social ceremonies (*anushtans*) therein. It was hence called his sanctuary. He was full of his mission when he came to the sanctuary for performing this most important ceremony. A sacred song (*bhajan*) was sung and a sermon written by him previously was read. The most important

part of the ceremony was his own address whereby he sent forth a strong current of higher feelings, aspirations and good wishes (*i.e.*, *mangal kamnas*). It stimulated his (own) higher powers and filled his heart to the full. Tears flowed down his cheeks in abundance as he was moved by compassion for sinful humanity and love for their elevation to the sphere of goodness, truth and beauty. His heart glowed with the hope and fervour of a saviour and life-giver. The small audience was also moved to tears. His followers took an oath of allegiance and faithfulness to the mission and its standard.

"The *Dev Dharm* (thus) sprang from the fully organised soul of Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan and was watered by the noblest and purest of waters (that flowed from the unique soul of Bhagwan Dev Atma). It was bound to grow and extend as it has ever done so. His very few followers at the time were formed into a society called the Dev Samaj."

The foundation of Dev Samaj had thus its humble origin unnoticed at that time by any contemporary paper. But it was a unique step. A society was founded with a truly spiritual basis. Its constitution underwent great many changes according to the growing experience and progress of evolution in Bhagwan Dev Atma.

VIII

THE EARLY PECULIARITIES OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

The Dev Samaj was founded by Bhagwan Dev Atma for the fulfilment of his unique life mission. In fact it was the direct outcome or fruit of his own *Dev Jivan* or highest ideal life. It was therefore bound to grow in its nature and constitution with the progress of the unique divine forces of Bhagwan Dev Atma and his wider and varied experiences of human nature. Bhagwan brought into the world an altogether new and unique message. It was a message that had nothing to do with the missions declared by Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, etc. He never called mankind like Semetic prophets Jesus, Moses, Mohammad etc., to the mere professions of belief in Jehova and his so-called revealed books, with liberal promise to sinners of the fanciful sensual luxuries in an imaginary place called paradise. He considered all such worship to be sheer mockery and fraud as is divorced from moral and higher life which is manifested in every day life of the man in general. He did not call upon mankind to cut off all ties and responsibilities of domestic, social natural life, etc., and seek individual salvation in a forest nook or mountain peak and thus seek a pure isolated individualistic ideal of life. He tabooed it as a perfectly selfish ideal. He brought into the world a message of new life—life of real freedom, here on this earth from slavery to low-loves and low-hates (which breed all forms of sins, evils, superstitions, falsehoods, crimes of all kinds, infidelity in various relations, etc.) and evolution into higher and altruistic forces—a life

which can establish mutually trustworthy and higher harmonious connections in various relations.

Though even intimate colleagues of Bhagwan in Brahmo Samaj failed to see the real nature of the unique forces of the highest life, which had blossomed in the soul of Bhagwan, yet they were all the same struck by the marvellous changes which were brought about in the lives of many a soul, who came directly under the influences of Bhagwan's life. From time to time they expressed their feelings of appreciation in various letters—some extracts whereof we quote to show how they felt about Bhagwan's work.

Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of which Bhagwan was a great pillar of strength in North-west India was founded in 1878. In 1879, the late lamented Babu Navin Chandra Roy who is credited with being a Founder of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj wrote to Bhagwan a letter in which he said :—

“ I am very delighted to hear from you after a long time, and the more so as you have been busily engaged in doing His beloved work. *Would there be a few more souls like you in Hindustan and the Punjab.*”

Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri wrote in his letter dated the 20th March, 1881 :—

“ I am exceedingly delighted to read the report of your work. God bless you. He has raised you up to become pillar of the church.”

Babu A. C. Mozumdar wrote to him in letter dated the 10th February, 1882 :—

“ *I have great faith in your powers of moulding human character.*”

Again in his letter dated the 3rd December, 1884, Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri wrote to Bhagwan :—

“ You are one of the sincerest lovers of truth that I have ever met.”

Continuing further, he wrote :—“ I have not that faith and that love of God which you have. Do pray for me during your daily devotions. I do the same for you.”

When Pandit Shiva Nath Shastri came to know that some of the Punjab Brahmos felt jealous at the success of Bhagwan and consequently burned in their hearts and tried to harm Bhagwan, the Pandit wrote in his letter of the 12th May, 1884 :—

“ Poor.....How does he dare to think of restraining a man whom God has raised and whom God is leading for the good of His church. I see clearly with the eye of faith, the direct hand of God leading you. By the bye let me relate an amusing conversation that I had with a Bengali lady at Gaya. Previously to my arrival there this

lady had been requested by a known Nava Bidhani (New Dispensationist) of the place, to ask me if we (meaning yourself and myself) considered ourselves directly led by the hand of God to preach Brahmoism. The simple-minded woman, in obedience to the request, did put me the question and do you know what answer I made? I at once said, well as regards my friend Agnithori, I can boldly say that he is being led by the hand of God, but as regards myself, let me once more examine my heart, before I reply. Since then I am daily feeling more and more powerfully our sacred mission. Go on Agnithori, God is leading you, go on regardless of mean opposition."

"Yes I too gratefully remember those happy days during which we were together. I have been much benefited by your company. My love of God has been strengthened. What more benefits can a man desire from a fellow man."

Again he wrote as under in his letter dated the 10th July, 1885 :—

"We were all very much delighted to read the account of your work. God is with you, there is no doubt about it. I can see with the eyes of faith that God has raised you to be a power in the North West. Go on in the path you have chalked out for yourself. My earnest prayers are always with you."

Three days later, he again wrote :—

"God has raised you for a great mission."

Mr. A. C. Muzumdar wrote on the 9th September, 1885 :—

"We consider you the life and soul of the Samaj in Upper India. Your life, your actions, your very words are guiding stars to many."

These letters give one an idea of the impression which Bhagwan's life and work produced on the minds of the great leaders of the Brahmo Samaj. This impression lasted on the minds of some for several years thereafter. The well-known Babu Sasipada Bannerji of Baranagore, Calcutta, wrote to Bhagwan a letter in the month of October, 1891, in which he said :—

"I have read with very great interest account of your admirable work and have wondered how single-handed you have been able to do so much."

He wrote again :—

"You are destined to do great good to the country by your devoted life in the cause of religion and social progress. I shall always be thankful to take lessons from your teachings and your work." (Italics are all along ours—author.)

It is indeed sad that the Brahmo Samaj as a body neither benefitted by the unique influences of Bhagwan, nor by his marvellous work of changing the hearts of people. On the contrary many of them proved a hindrance in such work, hence he had to secede from it.

But though Bhāgwan cut off his connection with the Brahmo Samaj, he held almost the same views about soul, and its future as the Brahmo Samajists did. His God was Brahmo God. He believed along with them in the beneficence of God. But the point where he parted company from them was a new ideal or new mission which he had made the master love of his life. His God was God of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. He was a living and feeling personality. The bare belief in Him and His beneficence, His formal worship and the offering of prayers to Him did not count in the least with him, whereas they were all and all for millions of theists and the majority of Brahmos. His God was to be realized in every day life, in all our thoughts and in all our activities. Bhagwan's God demanded undivided love and complete self-surrender and self-sacrifice. To love God was to live like Him—a life in consonance with all that is true, all that is good and all that is beautiful. Hence to go against Bhagwan's God was violation of truth and goodness which must lead to a life of sin, selfishness, corruption and degradation. This low life entailed on man no end of avoidable sorrows, mortifications, and miseries. Bhagwan thought that his mission was to bring back man to this God of truth and goodness by weaning him from the life of untruth and wrong (*i.e.*, from attachment to worldly and sensual things and false beliefs) and growing in him life of truth and goodness according to his capacity. He believed the higher life of truth and goodness to have been bestowed upon him by God with the object of sharing it with others.

This was in fact the declaration which he made on the 16th February, 1887, when he laid the foundation of his unique society. He had a very small following at that time. He had hardly half a dozen followers, of whom three were missionaries. In those days Bhagwan edited a weekly Urdu organ called *Dharm Jiwan*. But all the greatest movements in the world and the greatest and grandest phenomena in Nature had humble beginnings. Such was the case with the Dev Samaj also.

Soon after the founding of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan framed several rules for its membership which every candidate was required to fulfil before he was initiated to the society and no one could become its member merely by birth in a Dev Samaj family. The important conditions from amongst these, as published in *Dharm Jiwan* for 10th April, 1887, were as under :—

1. Getting training into the principles and practices of Dev Dharm *under the guidance of Guru* (*i.e.*, Bhagwan) at least for one year.
2. Turning away from sin or *undergoing real change of heart*.
3. Spreading the Dev Raj or the kingdom of Goodness and Truth among mankind for one's own spiritual good and evolution.
4. *Observing truth and justice* and practising love and purity not only in word and deed but even in thought, and trying to prove true to them in spite of all (the temptation of) the worldly things and relations.

5. Following all the rules and regulations of the Dev Samaj and observing all its social rites and ceremonies.

6. Feeling oneself as the living limb of the Dev Samaj body. Bhagwan believed sin to be a thing that was opposed to truth, goodness, justice and purity. These were the qualities which he believed to be the attributes of God in those days. It was incomprehensible to this great lover of truth and goodness, how a man living life at variance with them, could be a God-worshipper. He meant to remove this mockery at least in his own society. Hence in August 1887, he introduced new changes in the constitution of the Dev Samaj and classified all its members and sympathisers into three groups according to their development in inner life. They were as under (*vide Dharm Jiwan* for 21st August 1887) :—

1.—*Dev Dharm Sahaiks* (sympathisers) *i.e.*, those who helped the cause of the *Dev Dharm* by assisting its workers in their work and tried to spread its literature in their station and paid at least ten rupees per annum for the help of the Dev Samaj and received in return all the publications of the society free.

2.—*Nava Jiwan Yafta*, *i.e.*, those who had turned a new leaf in life by a real change of heart. These persons were required to observe twenty one rules, some of which that are worth mentioning are these :—

I. Observing cleanliness of their body and clothes.

II. *Keeping as foremost* before themselves the *principles of justice, truth and love*, in all their daily dealings with others.

III. Contributing one-tenth of their income to the cause of the Dev Samaj.

IV. Observing no caste distinctions and eschewing all other false outward religious symbols.

V. Remaining always free from falsehood, theft, dishonesty, injustice, adultery, and every kind of intoxicant and meat-eating, etc.

3.—The third group consisted of those who had grown stronger in the observance of the rules laid down for the second group. And if any one broke any of these rules, he was given reformatory punishment and was re-instated after he had undergone it ; otherwise he was dismissed from the Samaj.

This shows the trend which Bhagwan was practically following in dealing with the daily lives of his people. There are societies, which foolishly say, that the work of moral changes, which Bhagwan so successfully achieved, would be begun by them only when they had brought the whole world within the fold of their society. The fact is that they are wanting in the forces which could help them to achieve the necessary success. But to keep up their 'ego' they try to save their face by such a foolish pretext. They fail to realise, like millions of their other theistic brethren, that a powerful love force alone can move a man either for the highest good or greatest harm of others according to its nature. If they or the founders of their

societies had possessed the highest forces of Bhagwan, they would have felt as restless as Bhagwan in directing all their energies to the liberation of man from low life. But that was not to be, as they were absolutely void of all these forces. Even after having seen Bhagwan doing that unique work, the propagandist of several faiths and creeds felt bewildered as to how Bhagwan was able to do all that, but they found no way out of the difficulty. Once a new society tried to imitate Bhagwan by insisting upon all its members to abjure only one sin, and all around them they heard voices of protest raised against their mad move. They were told that their society, would lose most of the members if even this one simple condition were insisted upon. Some said openly "let us not meddle with the private life of our members." Hence what constituted the real work of Dharma for Bhagwan was left out altogether from their programme by such God-ridden but morally impotent societies.

DEV SAMAJ, A NEW INSTITUTION.

Bhagwan made a declaration in the columns of *Dharm Jiwan* for the 4th December, 1887 that "Brahm Dharm" and "Dev Dharm" were not one and the same thing. The gist of what he wrote is given below:—

We called the universal.....Dev Dharm.....whose singular characteristics and beauties we have described in our published lecture on "One Universal and Divine Religion of the World" by the name of "Brahm Dharm," because we were then connected with the Brahmo Samaj (even though that connection was only nominal). But on the 16th February 1887, we considered it proper.....to call Dev Dharm by its own proper name, and not as "Brahm Dharm." This name absolves the Brahmo Samaj and its members of all responsibility that attaches to the propagation of Dev Dharm and it leaves us all unfettered to work independently for our mission. Hence wherever the word "Brahm Dharm" has been used in our own publications, it should be understood in the sense of "Dev Dharm." In their subsequent editions, the necessary change would be made by us.

This declaration makes the position of Bhagwan absolutely clear that Brahmo Samaj and Dev Samaj became two distinct societies from the 16th February, 1887. This thorough separation was absolutely necessary for the development of the Dev Samaj.

Not only did the Dev Samaj have nothing to do with the Brahmo Samaj, but as a vehicle of the new light and power, which had appeared in Bhagwan Dev Atma, it was and is quite distinct from all other societies of the world. The Dev Samaj was a vehicle of the *Dev Shakti* whose perennial fountain Bhagwan imagined at that time to be in his God but who worked through him. He had not realised that the *Dev Shakties* had blossomed in his own soul and consequently he was not an instrument in the hands of any imaginary Being, but that he was himself the perennial fountain-head of those highest psychic forces. But even then he was conscious that the

work of creating new life in souls (which was being done in the Dev Samaj) was absent in other sects and societies. He wrote in *Dharm Jiwan* for the 25th September, 1887 :—

“ No man can get freedom from worldly life without the help of Dev Shakties. No amount of belief in thousands of scriptures—*Vedas, Bible, Quran, etc.* can avail in the least. The daily lives, lived by millions of people who boast of these religious books, corroborate our statement most clearly. The followers of Dayanandi cult, inspite of their great cry of *Vedas* cannot count in their society even one per cent among their members who—what to say of purity of life or spiritual awakening—possess moral courage enough to uphold justice even in social matters.....Without the help ofDev Shakties man following in the wake of his own low-likes, cannot but develop life of world-worship and sin, and can never manifest the higher characteristics and purity of higher life. The sooner mankind realises this truth, the easier it would be for them to distinguish between the cry of false faiths and the real spiritual life and the teachings of truly higher souls.”

Bhagwan had also thrown open the door of his society to all people of all denominations. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, afterwards the founder of the Ahmedya movement, with its head office at Qadian, felt great sympathy with the work of the Dev Samaj. We find in the columns of the *Dharm Jiwan* for 18th December, 1887, the following paragraph which tells its own tale :—

“ The sympathy which Musalman friends have shown for our mission deserves our appreciation and thanks. Our old and esteemed friend Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Rais* of Qadian, has expressed his sympathy in a letter which we value very much. He writes :—

‘ I have not the least hesitation in sympathizing with your mission. Your society is not confined merely to lip professions. But it has got practical enthusiasm. I regret that I cannot win the virtue of showing full sympathy this year on account of some other necessary expenses which have also been incurred for the good of God’s creatures. However within period of twenty days I will send you Rs. 5 instead of Rs. 4. Consider Re. 1 as a contribution from me. If I live next year and get the opportunity I will show more practical sympathy.’

“ We hope that our other Muslim brethren would immitate the good example of Mirza Sahib. Having come out of the traps which our misguided countrymen have laid in the name of religion in order to foment differences among Hindus and Mohamedans, they would realise the beauty of the universality and purity of the teachings of Dev Dharm which are calculated to appeal to people of all denominations, and would more gladly extend forward the hand of help.”

In order to further elucidate the peculiarities of his Samaj, Bhagwan wrote a note in *Dharm Jiwan* for the 11th November, 1888, under the heading, “ The living spiritual Samaj.” He said therein:—

"The living spiritual Samaj is that in which every member shows signs of the working of.....*Dev Shakti* in his life to a greater or less extent, without hindrance, *i.e.*, every one of its members may not, on the one hand, be desirous of obtaining any worldly pleasure, gain or relation at the cost of violating any principle of truth, justice and purity, and, on the other, every weak but sincere soul may get power and feel an urge to grow in higher life. In this atmosphere here every such soul may feel ashamed of his fallen condition, who though at first sincere and weak may have, on account of his weakness, become insincere by giving preference to any worldly thing or relation over higher life, and he may feel that he would not get any impetus or encouragement as long as he followed that evil course. Yea, in which society *true goodness is appreciated, and love for higher life and purity and living hatred for every kind of sin, evil and untruth may be working.* In which society no one may be thought higher or given any higher position on account of his worldly dignity, wealth, rank, title or power but every one may be acknowledged higher only by virtue of his true spiritual purity and development in altruistic or higher powers. The manifestation of the Dev Dharm is the advocate of such a living spiritual Samaj."

This shows that Bhagwan felt that he had discovered a formulæ of higher life which was as much of universal application as any truth of science or of mathematics, etc. This was the gospel of the new life and wherever mankind lived, this gospel would appeal. The Dev Samaj, he believed, was a society as much distinguishable from Brahmo, Arya and other Samajes and sects, as the *Dev Shakties* were distinct from the lower forces which dominated every sphere of human life. The full nature of these unique forces was not clear to Bhagwan in those days or he would have felt that these highest psychic forces had never manifested themselves in any soul before his advent.

However from the time that Bhagwan hoisted the flag of Dev Dharm and founded the society of the Dev Samaj, he felt his society to be unique and his mission matchless. In order to do this unique work, he felt a need for a house of its own for the Dev Samaj, where he could carry on the propaganda work all unimpeded and unhindered.

In Brahmo Samaj Bhagwan's example had no parallel. When Babu K. C. Sen seceded from Maharishi Tagore's Adi Brahmo Samaj, he had several colleagues who had thrown in their lot with him. Thus a good group of men went out to work their own society after their ideals. When Sadharanists seceded from the society after Kutch Behar marriage, they formed the majority of the members of the whole Samaj. But when Bhagwan left Brahmo Samaj in order to work out his own mission, he was all alone because of his unique life and unique ideal. He had to start his work in a rented house. The Brahmos, therefore, had, as a rule, a vague lingering idea, that Bhagwan being a lonely

traveller on his new path would be able to achieve nothing. Some of them actually ridiculed the idea how Bhagwan would gain the wherewithals to accomplish his mission. Babu Sasipada was therefore right when he expressed a great surprise at the success which Bhagwan began to achieve altogether single handed. But Bhagwan had come into the world equipped with powers which bore the clear impress of sure victory.

Hence in the very first year, Bhagwan succeeded in purchasing a plot of land in Anarkali, Lahore, and the first anniversary of the Dev Samaj was held on its own grounds in a beautiful thatched *mandap* raised for the occasion. The story of how the plot came to be purchased is not without its own lesson and interest. Bhagwan held strong conviction that everything would come in its own time. He had made every effort to get a suitable piece of land or house in a suitable locality and within his means before this. But all the efforts bore no fruit. However when time came all went on quite smoothly. A plot of land in Anarkali was being auctioned under the decree of a court. For the first two days the auction went on but the hammer was not struck. It was on the third day *i.e.* 3rd December 1887, that Shriman Udho Ramji, the revered uncle of Bhagwan's wife informed him of this. Bhagwan sent one of his men to go and see the plot and report if it was one for which he should offer a bid. His man reported that the plot would suit the requirements. Bhagwan had no money. He went to a gentleman who had some reverence for him. He told the wealthy gentleman what he had come to him for. He asked for a loan. The gentleman at once wrote out a cheque in his favour for Rs. 4,000. With this cheque in his pocket, Bhagwan went to the auction place. To his surprise, he saw one of the wealthiest men of Lahore present there. Bhagwan was naturally filled with a misgiving that the chances for him to get the plot were considerably minimised as long as that wealthy magnet was there. However Bhagwan began to offer his bids even against that wealthy man. When the bid had gone sufficiently high, all at once the wealthy magnet got up and went away leaving the coast clear for Bhagwan. The last bid was of Bhagwan and the land was auctioned in his favour for Rs. 3,185.

Now this plot was merely an uneven piece of land filled with rubbish from all round. Bhagwan very soon got it cleared and levelled. As the first anniversary of the Dev Samaj was very near, he got a thatched Hall (or *mandap*) set up there. It was very beautifully decorated and the first anniversary was held there. The foundation stone laying ceremony of the Dev Dharm Prachar Hall was also performed on this occasion. On the 2nd September, 1888, while performing the opening ceremony of the first set of buildings of Dev Ashram built on it, Bhagwan was pleased to say :—

“ When we got this plot, people expressed doubts as to how we would be able to get funds for erecting buildings on it.....However when.....we made an appeal for funds to our countrymen, they



"THE DEV ASHRAM" AT LAHORE
The first Headquarters of the Dev Samai.

began to respond to it.and we were wonder-struck to see, that, in spite of the fact that our mission and the way of accomplishing it were quite new to the people and the kingdom of truth, justice and purity, which we are out to establish on this earth, was unpalatable to our world-worshipping friends, help poured in from all round in a very short time. *Those whom we expected to help us in this work disappointed us. Those who had very much profitted by our work showed utter ingratitude. But the quarters we least expected to help us, came generously to our aid.* In this very short time, nearly four thousand rupees have been subscribed out of which about two thousand realised in cash have been expended on the construction work. The Prachar Hall still remains to be built and we entertain most sanguine hope that by God's mercy it would also soon be completed."

"We see, and you all can also see if you possess the inner light, that the work which the *Dev Shakti* started five years ago (*i.e.* in 1882) has up to now made steady progress, and it is bound to make progress in the future too."

The appeal was for rupees ten thousand. The Ashram which was built was called Dev Ashram. It stands to-day as a monument of the initial efforts of Bhagwan Dev Atma. It was the first building which Dev Samaj possessed. For years it was the main centre for all congregational purposes. The silver Jubilee celebrations of Bhagwan's Life-Vow in 1907 were held in that building. Thereafter quite adjacent to the Commissioner's Office, the Dev Samaj built a very grand building known by the name of "Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan Memorial Mandir" which is the pride of the outer achievements of the work of Bhagwan Dev Atma and which is now the headquarters of the Samaj at Lahore.

While thanking the donors to the Dev Ashram fund on that occasion, Bhagwan said :—

"We offer our heartiest congratulations and thanks on this occasion to all those kind donors among you who have contributed their quota to our Ashram fund. We want to assure them that their money has not been lost, but it has been utilized in the service of the cause which is the highest possible cause in this world. Besides them, they are the most blessed people who have subscribed their lives to this greatest cause (which is a living fountain of higher spiritual life, intended to save men from the meshes of sin)."

Though Bhagwan felt pleased at having a building of its own for his Samaj, so that the Samaj may steadily and permanently carry on the propaganda work, yet he knew that he had not come into the world to erect buildings. On the occasion of the foundation-stone laying ceremony of the Dev Dharm Prachar Hall on 16th February 1888, the first anniversary of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan had said :—

"We do not consider the (brick and stone) buildings to be in themselves of any great significance, because the world already possesses any number of such buildings. Even in our very

neighbourhood we find monumental buildings.....Our mission is not to raise buildings. Jesus Christ did not possess even such a *mandap* as we have got for our celebrations.....What was the worldly wealth which Jesus and his followers and other great men possessed? Practically nothing. But they were destined.....to achieve a great mission.....Though we are insignificant persons so far wealth and position of the world are concerned, but the highest service of souls, which we possess the capacity of doing, has not fallen to the lot of man in general."

The work which was turned out by Bhagwan during the very first year of Dev Samaj's existence needs mention both as illustrative of the vast and phenomenal energy that Bhagwan put forth in order to promote his mission as well as of the nature and quality of the work in which Dev Samaj was engaged:—

1. The Samaj work was carried on in 35 stations of the Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, United Provinces, Behar, etc. The distance covered for this purpose was about 8,800 miles.
2. Ninety-three meetings were held for sermons and prayers.
3. Twenty-nine processions were held including some social congregations.
4. 490 pages (of books) were republished.
5. 698 pages of new books were written and published.
6. 408 pages of the weekly paper, *Dharm Jiwan* were written on the highest subjects of soul welfare.
7. 7395 books and pamphlets were sold for Rs. 710.
8. 2000 persons visited the Prachar office.
9. 25 souls awakened to the consciousness of their sinful life.
10. Four missionaries and two candidate missionaries were ordained; and 20 converted souls, *i.e.*, those who abstained from various sins and crimes and pledged to abstain from them in future and 34 sympathisers were enrolled.

Thus the Dev Samaj started on its great career under most hopeful beginnings and with a full consciousness that the mission that it had to achieve was absolutely a unique one, and that it had nothing to do with the Brahmo or any other samaj or society.

The net result of the second year's work was still more significant. It showed the spirit which animated this very small society:—

1. Nine persons were initiated as candidate members and two as regular members of the society.
2. One member was initiated as a *pracharak* or missionary.
3. The number of *Sahaiks* or sympathisers rose to hundred. Out of this fifty were secured during the year.

4. Twenty-five new books and pamphlets were published.
5. Nearly Rs. 4,000 were collected from the Punjab, Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal, Madras, Rajputana, Central India and Burma.
6. The mission work was extended to Behar.
7. A new paper called *Qaumi Akhbar* was started for social and other public purposes which was subsequently converted into a supplement of the *Dharm Jiwan*.
8. *Sahaik Sabhas* were instituted at Patna, Khusropur and Hoshiarpur, where *Sahaiks* met periodically for self improvement and for widening sphere and scope of the activities of the Dev Samaj.

Looking to the high tone of character which was demanded from members and the morally degraded condition of our people from amongst whom the souls were rescued, and looking also to the very small (nay, insignificant) number of the workers through whom Bhagwan had to carry on his great work, the results obtained were indeed most splendid. The whole of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, consisting of all its members without Bhagwan (who had left them) stood practically stagnant. In spite of this fact, none of the Brahmos, who had, by losing Bhagwan, lost the only life and soul of their society, could ever realise that the soul forces which had evolved in Bhagwan were unique in their character.

It would not give us a correct picture of the energy spent on the work unless something is said about the nature of the activities put forth by the society, *i. e.* :—

1. Public meetings were held every Sunday evening in the Dev Ashram.
2. Every Thursday another meeting was held for the good of those who regularly attended Sunday evening meetings.
3. Every Wednesday night a private meeting was held for the definite object of developing love or *Bhakti* for God. These meetings used to last for the whole night on several occasions. The love of God meant development in every day life of hatred against sinful courses of life and love for truth, goodness, justice, purity, etc., which were believed to be then the virtues of God.
4. *Daily* meetings were held directly for the object of growing in souls virtues of higher love, humility, purity and disinterested service of others.
5. There were *daily* devotional meetings for the benefit of the missionaries.
6. There were *daily* meetings for missionaries to inculcate the teachings of the truths of Dev Dharma held by Bhagwan himself.

7. Every Sunday another meeting was held for the missionaries in which Dev Dharm *Gita* was explained text by text by Bhagwan himself.

8. A Sunday class was opened for the benefit of the students of various schools at Lahroe.

9. A weekly meeting was held by the workers in order to devise ways and means for spreading the teachings and work of the Dev Samaj.

10. There were also besides these several social and ceremonial meetings held in connection with the reformed rites.

Besides sermons delivered vocally in these meetings the propagation work done through pen was not insignificant. Thus the programme of the work of the few devoted servants of this unique society led by Bhagwan was simply grand and consequently the net results was very heartening.

III

RADICAL CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES IN THE DEV SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's entire mission was directed to the study and dissemination of truths about soul-life and to bringing higher changes in the lives of people, winning them over from sin and corruption to the side of justice, purity, disinterested service, etc. This necessitated very close contact with inner life of humanity.

From Brahmo Samaj Bhagwan had acquired a belief that every human soul possessed divine germs, capable, under the tending and fostering care of God, to make perennial progress. But his experience altogether disillusioned him on two points. Firstly, he came to realise that it was an absolute myth, that all human beings were born with divine germs capable of infinite progress. He saw that some souls were almost hopelessly incapable of shaking off the fascination of sin and sinful life, or the world and its worship. Secondly, he came to realise that God was as incapable of bringing about any change in a sinful soul directly, exactly as his worship was incapable of removing physical darkness or mental ignorance. As physical darkness needed the sun or the light of a lamp or some other light to remove it and an ignorant man needed the real environments of a teacher to illumine his mind, in the same way the almighty and beloved God could not remove soul-darkness and liberate sin-ridden souls, without the direct hand of a human *Guru* or guide, possessed of true soul-light and soul-power. Hence between the years 1891 and 1894, Bhagwan revolutionised the whole basis of the Dev Samaj

The first great and all-important step that he took was, the declaration he made, that souls must unite with him if they needed light of soul to illumine them about the truths of higher life and the soul-power which could change the entire course of their life. He

further declared that no illusion of direct communion with Lord God would help them a bit. Let us quote what he himself said about this. We translate the following from his great work *Mujh men Dev Jiwan ka Vikas*, Part I, Chapter 18 :—

“ On the one hand, I have before me (according to my then belief) the picture of a being whom I regard as *Param Dev*; who is the infinite source of *Devat* (*i. e.*, an embodiment of truth, goodness and justice) who is free from all untruth, injustice and evil and is hence perfectly pure; who not only does not do any sinful or evil act in any relation based on untruth and wrong, but who hates any such behaviour on the part of any soul; on the other hand, I witness those millions of world-worshipping souls who are not only completely void of the heart forces of love for truth, goodness and justice, but who being slaves to their low desires, low passions and low egoistic powers, champion the cause of injustice and evil; nay, who love evil and thereby become guilty of sin, crime, wickedness, cruelty and injustice not only in human relations but in relation to sub-human kingdoms also. Besides committing horrible injustice on others they do not and cannot hesitate from committing various kinds of sins and crimes even in relation to their family members and others of near kin.”

“ Feeling myself between these two positions, I see and definitely realize that so long as man does not awake to the consciousness of the influences of those highest psychic forces of highest life which have evolved in me, and imbibe the unique light illuminating my soul which reveals various subtle and most beautiful truths relating to lower and higher lives and their respective consequences, and does not absorb that higher repulsion for untruth, evil and corruption which I possess, owing to the evolution of higher loves in me; this world would not be free from low life and the consequent misery and hellishness which is pervading the humanity. Nor would man be able to evolve those higher and noble forces which produce most cordial relations all around and thus usher in an era of true bliss, higher peace, and higher blessedness and make the soul-life of man very beautiful and beneficent, and thus put him on the road to ever progressive life.”

“ I also realised that my God, in spite of being the fountain head of all higher life, and in spite of the fact that He dwells in the hearts of men, neither did, nor could, convey or communicate that light to the sin-ridden souls enveloped in soul-darkness, which I did and could convey to them, and which helped them to see their sin and darkness-wedded life in its truly evil and horrible form and created in them a restlessness to be free from it. Nor could or did He impart to them that unique power which I infused in fit souls and which changed their entire lives for the better and made them travellers on the path of higher life.”

“ I saw that as physical darkness of any one's room could not be removed without the light of the sun or a lamp etc., nor could

any one be educated without the mental light of a competent teacher, so the above kind of higher changes in the hearts of men could not be brought about by God without my agency."

Hence in the year 1892, Bhagwan published the following declarations about the manifestation of Dev Dharm in him and its objects :—

" 1. The manifestation of Dev Dharm or true highest life has appeared.....in my own soul and all its higher and special qualities are found in my soul."

" 2. He indeed is ignorant who seeks the higher qualities and blessings of this special manifestation of higher life anywhere else save in my own soul."

" 3. The special manifestation in my soul of this unique higher life has this set purpose that those souls who, following in the wake of their own egoistic forces and being steeped in soul darkness, are ruining their lives by the poison of world-worship and sin, may leave that ruinous path and by uniting with me, may save themselves from the consequences of lower life and acquire the heritage of higher and pure life and its heavenly blessings."

Some time after in 1892, Bhagwan made a still more definite declaration about his manifestation and published the following short paragraphs about it :—

" 1. I have brought for you a higher light. Be ye united with me and receive that light which is in me."

" 2. Only by reverentially uniting with me and getting my light can you see and realise those truths that pertain to Dev Dharm or true higher life."

" 3. Are there not those among you who have received such light from me by which they have been able to more or less comprehend the truths of my teachings."

" 4. Bear in mind that so far you have been able to receive very little of my light. Hence in that light you can see very little. Apart from seeing the truths of lower order, you have very little ability of seeing the higher truths of higher life and that even very seldom."

" 5. As you get more and more of my light, you will not only see more fully and clearly the higher visions and sights of the life of *Devat*, but according as this light deepens in your soul you will also get freedom from the bondage of those lower courses of life, which instead of helping you to bask in the light of *Devat* always keeps you steeped in the darkness of worldliness and sensual desires."

" 6. To the extent that you receive this light of mine, you will be able to convey its rays to others who are comparatively in greater darkness than you are."

"7. Soul-darkness, making a soul go astray, leads it to the path of soul-annihilation. My light brings a man out of that darkness and puts him on the right path of higher life. *It saves him from death and imparts to him new life.*"

"8. Remember ! that it is not the sound of my words which illumined your souls but by uniting your hearts with mine you have got light from me with which these words are charged."

"9. Giving up all kinds of *Baghawat* (disloyalty) towards me, unite your soul with mine with ties of higher love, as then alone you will be able to receive more and more of my light."

"10. The light that is given to me and is being still imparted to me is not for my own use alone. It is to be conveyed to others, *i. e.*, the souls of the whole world."

"11. Ye souls ! take from me the light which has manifested in my soul for the good of others. Do not deprive yourselves of its life-giving blessings by being led away from me under the domination of any low love."

"12. Blessed are they who do not follow in the wake of their false ego, their soul-darkness-generating low connections and the ways of the worldly persons, and who come or do wish to come to bask in my light which tends to save their souls from darkness and death."

This declaration laid down the essential need of the union of souls with Bhagwan and thus the Dev Samaj took a direct unmistakable and blessed step in proclaiming itself as not only a child of Bhagwan but as irrevocably dependent upon him for its life, sustenance and progress. This new declaration came as bolt from the blue even to some of his own followers. But Bhagwan always stood by his light. We read the following in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for February 1910 which makes this point still more clear :—

"He (Bhagwan Dev Atma) found that a sinner in order to be saved from sin and to be pure and able to see, feel and hear God, as he thought it then, must first unite with him. The so-called communion with God independently of man-teachers, was an impossibility. What he felt and thought, he boldly declared. This declaration aggravated the opposition and made it widespread. Not a few, even of his followers wavered, halted, and hesitated to accept this position. But his new position was based on solid experience ; and every year's fresh evidence of the facts confirmed it. He not only persevered in his position, but every year's experience deepened his conviction of the paramount necessity and supreme importance of competent man-teachers for the purpose of changing the course of life of a sinner. He knew that he himself was gifted with the powers necessary to bring about this change in men's lives, provided they united with him with the feeling of reverence and

discipleship for the benefit of their highest good. His experience had shown him that no other man loved truth and goodness and hated untruth and evil as he himself did. He proclaimed these truths boldly and forcefully. The tempest of opposition rose so violently that its mountain waves appeared to engulf him and his mission inevitably.....Those alone who had long and repeated personal experience and therefore evolved unshakable reverence resolutely stood by him, the rest deserted him....."

But it has been a permanent and invariable trait in Bhagwan that he never counted the cost at any time while declaring truths which he discovered. Hence desertion of some of his followers and violent opposition by others could not and did not, at any time in his long public career, ever deflect him in the least from his onward path.

This new truth and its declaration necessarily brought about some radical changes in the constitution of the Dev Samaj :—

1. *A double worship was started* in the Dev Samaj, namely worship of God and worship of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

2. *A personal close and direct relation of followers with the Founder was thus established* with a clear understanding about the relation and position of the members of the society and its fountain head—the Bhagwan.

Thus his loyal followers began to draw nearer to his person and this enabled Bhagwan to impart his higher influences more effectively to them. They also began to seek for his highest influences through practical exercises (*Sadhans*) in his relation. A Dev Guru *Astotar* (a Sanskrit hymn) embodying the characteristics of Bhagwans highest life was composed which his followers of the higher grade recited in their *Sadhans* in order to realise more and more the ideals of life of Bhagwan and to aspire to follow it.

This change was a cardinal one. It was highly necessary for the fulfilment of his mission.

Besides the above most radical change in the constitution of the Dev Samaj by which Bhagwan Dev Atma was declared and accepted not only a guide and teacher, but also a worshipful being, there were other most important and supremely significant changes brought about in the organisation of the Dev Samaj. It would be better to translate the words of Bhagwan himself as given in Chapter 19 of his autobiography in Hindi, Part I :—

"The most painful and reprehensible conduct of some of the ungrateful deserters from the Samaj set me athinking very seriously about.....the constitution of the Dev Samaj. By this new experience I brought about several changes in the organisation of the Dev Samaj and framed and published new rules about the then and the future members of the Dev Samaj.....Members of the Samaj were designated with the new word of *Sewak* or disciple. A new system or ceremony for the initiation of "Sewaks" was introduced.

It was made imperatively compulsory for every one who desired to become or remain a "Sewak" to pledge to permanently refrain from at least the following sins :—

(1) All kinds of intoxicants, (2) Flesh-eating, (3) Gambling, (4) Theft, (5) Bribes-taking, (6) Perjury or giving false evidence, (7) Forgery, (8) Adultery, and (9) Killing."

Besides this a new system of religious exercises was introduced. This new system of religious exercises laid down as a compulsory item to contemplate over the *Dev Rup* (highest ideal life) of Dev Guru, i.e., Bhagwan Dev Atma, to deepen reverence and love for him by *jap*, etc.

The introduction of the word "Sewak" for a member was characteristic of the new view-point of the relation of the disciples of Bhagwan towards him. *The Samaj was made a society of disciples* who had to mould their lives after the ideal-life that had evolved in Bhagwan by imbibing his psychic light and power.

During this transitional period of the Dev Samaj another and most remarkable change was wrought by Bhagwan Dev Atma. This was necessitated by the fact that Bhagwan had in the light of his higher forces come to realise that the ideal, at which his unique powers were aiming, was the ideal of supreme harmony in all the various relations of man with human and sub-human worlds. While discoursing on this great truth, Bhagwan Dev Atma had said (some days before the sixth anniversary of the Dev Samaj) on the 7th February, 1893 :—

"It is a law of life (of every human soul) that the heart force which is dominating him or which is the master force in him primarily leads him to its own goal in his daily dealings and sends out its (specific) influences all around. Knowing this law of man's nature it is but necessary for man in general, and those more or less connected with me in particular, to analyse their mind and discover as to what consists the *most dominating or ruling force* of their life?I cannot say how far, even those, who have so far united with me, have understood or realised the nature of this ruling motive force of my life. It is, therefore, necessary for me to describe it briefly."

"The whole mission of my life would be made clear by understanding the principle of higher harmony. Harmony involves existence of more than one being. What are those beings or existences among which, I have come into the world, to establish higher harmony (having been gifted with the unique heart forces of highest). and thus to realise this supremely blessed mission? God and the whole creation specially humanity constitute the existences where-with it is my mission to establish higher harmony."

"The principles of this higher harmony are as follows :—

1. To realise oneself and all other existences as real.
2. To realise the bonds of relationship which the Creator has established among all these existences.

3. To feel a true desire for making oneself able to fulfil all duties and obligations in every one of these relations.

4. In order to realise this true desire to mould one's life by creating higher forces which are directly essential for the establishment of higher harmony in any relation and to gladly undertake all such exercises which may be necessary for becoming free from all old biases or low-habits working as a stumbling block in that path."

".....Just cast a glance around and see what the condition of the people of this world is? What is their attitude in relation to their own family members, to their race or nation, to mankind in general and to all other sub-human living and non-living existences? How far is the reign of higher peace or justice and goodness witnessed in the different inhabited places on the face of the world? Viewing all this, who would not feel the present condition of humanity as most deplorable and in many ways really hellish? Yes! it would be quite evident to every such person who is gifted with some power of observation, that in its present condition the human society does not at all live a life of true unity or higher harmony in various relations....."

"Though all this most painful and harmful discord and desolation prevails all round, yet people are quite indifferent to it. Where can we come across such souls (to whatever creed they may belong) who do feel pain at and hatred for all this state of affairs present in their own lives and value the life of higher harmony, as of supreme importance, and deem, in comparison with this ideal of higher harmony, every other thing as insignificant—be it a belief, creed, worship, etc. But those who have got an opportunity of studying my life activities with a finer inner eye, can vouchsafe how trivial and insignificant do I consider all other things as compared to that sacred and divine law of higher harmony which I declare as "*Ekta* or *Param Ekta*." The following saying of mine also illustrates my love for this higher harmony :—

'To the extent that a soul is united with me or has come under my influences, it is necessary for it to revere and love all such souls (to the extent that they are united with me and are following my guidance) and to consider himself as their kith and kin and them as his own kindred. But one who goes against this principle cannot be mine.'

"These words clearly indicate that I did not consider any soul as mine even though he had the same faith as I had or even if he believed in all my teachings, so long as he was not ready to establish higher harmony with others and did not make it an object of his life to prove a help in the promotion of my mission of *Param Ekta* (supreme harmony by mutually uniting with one another through the bonds of higher forces of *Devat*). It is clear from this that the establishing of this supreme harmony in all relations forms the chief mission of my life....."

This love for unity or higher harmony in all the mutual relations of man with human and sub-human kingdoms led Bhagwan to frame

a system of religious exercises conducive to the growth and promotion of that harmonious life in all his disciples and others. He published an important book called *Dev Anushtan Bidi* in which besides laying down the system of reformed rites to be observed from the conception of child, his naming after birth, corn feeding, tonsure or shaving of head, marriage to death, he, for the first time laid down the system of religious exercises (*Yagyas* as he then called them) in man's different relations. The whole year was divided into twelve periods; each period covering a month, was dedicated to exercises in connection with each relation of man. The disciple was required to specially think over and perform his duties in that relation during that period according to the specified teachings. The following were the twelve main relations with which a disciple was required to establish higher harmony based on higher life :—

1. Relation of parents and children.
2. Relation of brothers and sisters.
3. Relation with vegetable kingdom.
4. Relation of husband and wife.
5. Relation with the greatmen and saints of the world.
6. Relation of master and servants.
7. Relation with neighbours.
8. Relation with the departed ones.
9. Relation with animal kingdom.
10. Relation with the mineral world.
11. Relation with one's own nation or country.
12. Relation with the Dev Guru and the Dev Samaj.

These teachings of *Yagyas* were the forerunners of the elaborate, comprehensive and unique teachings of Bhagwan Dev Atma as regards man's duties in relation to the different parts of the cosmos and the beings or existences which it includes. His latest teachings in this respect are now contained in the *Dev Shashtra*, Part IV, third edition. However the rules and the reachings given in the above named book (*Dev Anushtan Bidhi*) clearly show that the one supreme desire of Bhagwan was to give altogether a new basis to his unique society and new turn to the religious thought, and convert humanity here on this planet into a noble species and thus establish the kingdom of truth and goodness on this earth. Thus Dev Samaj was not a society bound by mere lip beliefs or so called worship or false religious exercises or mere faith in Bhagwan Dev Atma or God, but it was a human laboratory for experimenting and creating a new race of men so moulded, as not only to consciously do no wrong or commit no sin or evil in any relation, but to apologise and make amends for even unconscious wrongs of commission or omission, and to try to be more and more useful and serviceable in various relations on the basis of true respect, reverence, gratitude, sympathy, etc.

The wonderful progress which Dev Samaj made both in its inner organisation, its prime objects and also in bringing about changes in the lives of people, made it a religious society in the true sense of the word. Let our Brahmo, Arya and other friends imagine for a moment what the fate of their societies would be as regards numbers if they did insist upon their members to permanently pledge to refrain from all those nine sins or crimes which it was incumbent upon every Dev Samajist to renounce? How can that sect or society be called religious whose members can with impunity commit dishonesties in money matters, take bribes, subsist on flesh, use one or more intoxicants, commit adulteries, etc., and yet continue not only to be its members but to be elected to its highest offices? *How can a society be called religious which has no moral basis?* They deserve to be called political societies. Political societies have their leaders and their creeds, so have these so-called religious societies their leaders in the so-called *Rasuls*, Prophets, Messengers, *Gurus*, *Rishes*, *Maharishis*, etc., and creeds which do fail to improve the private lives of people. We know of a society which took a serious alarm when some of its members tried to influence their leaders to make renunciation of at least one sin or evil as primary condition of the membership of their society in imitation of the Dev Samaj. The leaders openly avowed to their such utopian members that the introduction of such a condition would bring about disastrous effect on their numbers. So all that these so-called sects and societies want are numbers, and that also is what all political parties want. If renunciation of one sin was considered too much by that society, should they not, at least like sportsmen acknowledge the unique merit of the society which not only lays down but peremptorily demands the renunciation of as many as nine sins and crimes by every man as a condition precedent to his being admitted as a member. This was not all. Under the unique higher influences of Bhagwan's unique powers, the members were awakened to the horrors of their past sins so as to make due amends for them. Above all they were enabled gradually to gain strength to secure freedom from the bondage of low-loves and low-hates and help to develop higher love and higher hates and thereby establish higher harmony in various relations.

It was therefore inevitable for the unique soul of Bhagwan which hungered for establishing the kingdom of new and real higher life on this earth, so that man who is bound up with the ties of low-loves and low-hates may be able to establish his relations on the basis of higher loves and higher hates to break off his connection with the Brahmo Samaj or any such sect or society. He thirsted for seeing a race of new and higher human beings developed to whom life of low-loves and low-hates may appear hateful, unworthy of man, nay, productive of soul diseases, and hence meriting nothing better than abjuration and to whom the evolution of new altruistic life may appear as the only life worthy for man.

This thirst was the result of unique forces in Bhagwan which

endowed him with the unique capacity for achieving the above unique goal.

Though the seeds were planted for the unique Dev Samaj in this transitional period, yet it required time and experience for Bhagwan to develop it further and to give it the beauty and usefulness which it assumed when the great Bhagwan departed from this earth.

In the subsequent chapters we shall try in our humble way to briefly narrate those wonderful and drastic changes which Bhagwan thought essential in his growing light to bring about in the constitution of the Dev Samaj and thus make it a haven for the raising of a higher race of men and women.

This double worship of God and Bhagwan Dev Atma went on for some time. God is a myth hence his worship has no meaning. It can do no good. Nothing can be had from nothing. Hence as long as his disciples looked to God as the only being for worship and accepted Bhagwan merely as a guide, they naturally failed to make much progress beyond the change which the direct contact of Bhagwan brought about in their lives. But once they united their hearts with his and worshipped him, naturally rapid assimilation of Bhagwan's light and power took place in among such as were spiritually fitted to get them. Since they formed the fountain for quenching their thirst, they naturally went direct to it and easily satisfied their spiritual demand. As a result of the change of attitude many higher conversions took place in the lives of his disciples and the society proved a wonderful moral haven.

But now not only is God-worship in any shape, form or nature, abolished in the Dev Samaj, but even the false belief is considered to be harmful. The first great change in Bhagwan's mental outlook in this respect took place with regard to cosmos or universe. He felt it to be the truly real and grand thing with which man as a whole was very closely and inseparately bound up. This consciousness of the reality and supreme importance of universe made him to bring down his disciples from the giddy and imaginary heights of the supernatural to the solid and real world and to adjust their conduct in relation to it. Thus he laid the foundations of the Dev Samaj firmly on the solid bed-rock of the every day realities in Nature and their real reactions on human soul.

How this change took place in him can better be expressed in Bhagwan Dev Atma's own words (*vide Mujh men Dev Jiwan ka Vikash*, Part I, Chapter 21) :—

“The first book which produced in me a thirst for the study of Nature was Professor Drummond's well-known book, *The Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. The story of how I first came to be apprised of this book, how it attracted me, how it came into my hands and how helpful it proved to me in furthering my knowledge in this respect, is not only an interesting but an instructive narration. I see it quite plainly that as my advent in the course of human evolu-

tion was due to hereditary speciality, so were many of those phenomena unique which, after my birth, helped to evolve the germs of highest psychic forces of my heredity. One of those phenomena relates to this book.

“Some time before the year 1887, I was staying at a gentleman's in Baidnath (a great and sacred place of pilgrimage of Hindus). I saw a voluminous book lying on a table in his drawing-room. I felt an impulse to look into the book. I took it up. This book was the one that I have mentioned above. I was already a lover of the reign of law. Hence on seeing the title page and knowing that it dealt with the Natural law in the spiritual world, I felt thrilled to read it. I turned over its pages and cursorily went through many of them. It attracted me. I left that place but the love for the book stayed in my heart. Some time afterwards probably in the year 1892, I came to know that the book could be had at Lahore. Instantly I purchased it and began its study. I profited very much by that book for which I have ever felt indebted to the author. I have often remembered him in my good wishes (*Mangal Kamna Sadhan*). Even when writing these lines I feel my indebtedness to him and offer my best wishes for his welfare. This materially cleared my knowledge as regards the laws of evolution and dissolution as prevail in the universe and awakened a very strong desire in me to study the story of evolution of the universe and of man.”

“From this time a consciousness was born in me that I was a part of the great machinery of the universe and hence Nature was my very intimate relation. I also felt that besides me it was very closely related to the whole mankind. I felt, therefore, that it was imperatively necessary for me to learn and know more and more about it, *i.e.*, in one word to acquire true knowledge of it.”

“All that I believed about the cosmos by my independent study and reflection up to that time came to this:—

1. Nature is one and all its various departments or kingdoms are closely bound up to one another.

2. Man is part of the cosmos. Being bound up with the various kingdoms of Nature, he is affected by their good or bad influences.

3. All the various existences in Nature become better or worse according to the kind of relationship with other parts of Nature.

4. It is by the (soul) knowledge and assimilation of the influences of *Dev Shakties* (highest psychic forces) that man can unite with various existences by those *bonds or ties* which can, on the one hand, save him from the degrading influences and their baneful results and on the other, evolve him by enabling him to receive nobler or evolutionary influences.

5. The *supreme ideal* of life of man consists in establishing higher harmonious relations with the cosmos by means of *Devat* (forces of higher life.) By the realisation of the principles which I

have stated above, I saw the immense grandeur of the universe. It had never appeared to me as real and as true as now. I had never before discerned that close kinship with it which I felt now. I realised that betterment or degradation of life rested primarily on the nature of on's feelings or (heart) attractions for the various related existences in Nature. In spite of their belief in God, their worship, performance of *Sandhya* or offering of *Nimaz*, men in general became more and more degraded, because they were bound up (in their various relations) with low-heart bonds (or low-loves). Even animals and vegetables which believe in no God (and offer no worship) became better by getting favourable environments and worse by uniting with unfavourable cosmic relations. This wonderful knowledge of the law of relationship made me feel this universe, for myself and for other existences, such a true and close relative that I can hardly describe it in words."

This law of relationship made it imperatively necessary for the disciples of Bhagwan to cut off all such bonds, or get freedom from all such low-loves and low-hates in relation to various existences as degraded their life and develop higher loves and higher hates. Thus the foremost place was given to evolution of higher character in different relations. In a short time, the Dev Samaj came to be known as a truly religious and supremely moral society.

END OF DUAL WORSHIP.

As stated in the previous chapter, dual worship was introduced into the Dev Samaj in 1892, *i.e.*, worship of Bhagwan Dev Atma and worship of God. The Dev Samaj worshipped in the first place the inner beauties of the soul of Bhagwan, and having assimilated his light, it worshipped God also. This dual worship lasted only up to 1895. However, on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the Dev Samaj, God-worship was altogether dropped and the only object of worship that remained for the Dev Samaj was Bhagwan Dev Atma himself.

How this God worship came to be abolished is a very interesting study. About twelve years after Bhagwan embraced his unique life-vow, his growing mind was filled with doubts about the existence of God. A detailed account of this, we intend giving in Part VI of this book which would be exclusively confined to the history of Bhagwan's belief in God and his renunciation thereof. Here it would suffice to state that as soon as Bhagwan was convinced beyond doubt that such a being as God was an absolute myth, he could not, for any consideration, desist from declaring his changed faith. The following extract with some necessary changes from an article which appeared in the *Science-Grounded Religion* for April 1910, well describes the position of Bhagwan during those days:—

"No sooner did he come to this conclusion (that God is a myth) he abolished God-belief from his system of religion and thus

the whole system of teachings and practices in the Dev Samaj was changed and recast."

"On the occasion of eighth anniversary of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan announced to the followers his change of belief. It took him some time to make them understand his position. Now the founder had reached a sure and firm ground, a bed rock. By means of his study, observations and experiments carried on by the help of his remarkable, logical and critical faculties of mind, he had come to realise that the ceaseless change that was going on in every particle of universe affected the man's soul too and that soul was no exception to the operation of the immutable law. He saw that this constant change produced two courses in all beings—upward and downward—the latter leading all things and persons to degeneration, decay and even as an extreme case to total extinction, and the former leading all non-living and living existences including the body and soul of man to higher stages of growth and evolution; that the course of evolution had led to the growth from lower and simpler living beings, beginning with single-celled entities to higher and more complex beings through various stages, till the external form in man became complete. That evolution took a new turn here from the double function of evolving body and mind to the evolution of mind alone in a wider sense; that the evolution of man depended on two indispensable factors—environments and heredity. This being so, every man was born with some physical tendencies and mental capacities. The communion of man with higher and evolved types developed in him those inherited capacities....."

"He wished to show to humanity that evolution of man consisted in developing powers that should enable him to perform his duties efficiently towards every cosmic relation and to make contributions towards the improvement of others by disinterested service. He wanted to make it clear to all human beings that omission of any of these duties in various relations and absence of the feelings for doing disinterested service of others spelled harm for them. It meant nothing but their gradual degradation, decay and in case of their unchecked course of life, death of their entire being. He saw and wanted to make others see that life of low-loves and low-hates which impelled man to inflict positive injury to human and sub-human entities was such a diseased condition that it meant in certain cases, even total extinction of man at the time of physical death. The efficient performance of duties in cosmic relations, and active and disinterested service of all so as to make them higher and better beings evolved a beautiful life in man—life of higher and altruistic forces, a life of religion. This evolution of man continued even after the dissolution of his gross body, since soul built a new and fine body and continued his existence in the finer world called *Parlok*..... Thus he taught that death was nothing but a transition from a gross to a subtle body, thereby rising to higher spheres according to its capacities or remaining earth-bound if life led was one of evil

desires and passions, etc. The course of construction and destruction commenced here on this planet, and persisted in the finer world. There was no escape from destruction but through emancipation of soul from low-loves and low-hates and evolution of higher and altruistic powers."

This revolutionised the entire outlook of the Dev Samaj and materially affected its entire course of religious exercises and the graduated and classified course of training. Religion was not synonymous with pleasing any God and finding communion with Him. It was not a name for any outward thing. It was a name for the evolution of higher life and the higher life was attained in relations, and not to be sought in forest nooks or mountain caves. It was a life of duties. It was a life of active, positive and real service to various relations. Thus religion consisted in *evolution* and not *annihilation*.

The source of all light and life was sought by Dev Samaj not in any mythical being but in a really existing manifestation of real Nature—the Bhagwan Dev Atma.

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA AS THE TRUE WORSHIPFUL BEING.

This revolutionary change of belief in Bhagwan brought about the most radical change in his mental outlook, in his philosophic teachings and in his system of religious exercises, etc. The immediate effects of this changed outlook are noted by Bhagwan Dev Atma himself as follows (*Vide Chapter 27 of Mujh men Dev Jiwan ka Vikash, Part I*):—

"The only knowledge worthy of being accepted by me after I renounced the false faith in God, was the knowledge which could stand the test of scientific method of investigation of *which I had become a complete lover*. I did not consider any matter as worthy of belief merely because of antiquity or newness, its being in vogue or otherwise, its being customary or non-customary, its being indigenous or foreign. My real and essential object of pursuit became the search, attainment and acceptance of only the true knowledge which could bear the searching scrutiny or thorough sifting by the scientific system of investigation."

"Having entered new phase.

1. My *national spirit* was greatly strengthened. So far as truth permitted, I considered it necessary and in accord with the course of evolution to harmonise all my teachings, religious exercises, domestic ceremonies and other activities with those that prevailed in my own race or nation. Hence the festivals which I fixed for the celebration of the *Brats* in connection with various cosmic relations in my society, were to harmonise with the dates of several Hindu festivals as far as possible. To sit in Hindu fashion on carpet or matting spread on clean floor at the time of religious exercises, to decorate the sanctuary with flowers, green leaves, and to deliver sermons with a small wooden table (*Vedi*) in front, had already been introduced by me in

the Dev Samaj. Instead of using Persian characters or speaking Urdu full of Persian and Arabic words in my literature and sermons etc., I freely began to use Dev Nagri characters and easy Hindi language which was closely related to Sanskrit. Though all that was false and unjust in the caste system had already been abolished by me, yet I felt it necessary to retain whatever was inoffensive or innocent in it.

2. My knowledge about the *Law of Relations* became very bright and clear. On deeply thinking over this law in my growing light, I realised the truth that as one or other relation proved beneficial under favourable conditions, in the same way it became highly detrimental under unfavourable conditions. For instance, castor oil is beneficial when one suffers from constipation but it is harmful in opposite condition. Milk is most useful and easily digestible for an infant aged a month but a loaf of wheat is fatal to its life. Reading and writing is beneficial when our eyes are in sound condition, but both these prove a curse if the eyes are sore. Similarly, marriage proves a blessing under one set of conditions but it becomes a calamity in another.....Under one set of circumstances, it is profitable to deliver a useful sermon to any person, while under another set of circumstances the same sermon would breed trouble. Declaration of a truth is helpful to a man in certain circumstances, while it is harmful to him in another. Charity profits the receiver under certain conditions, but it degrades him in others. It is sometimes helpful to give the hospitality of our roof to one on one occasion but on another it proves harmful.....etc., etc."

"This truth revealed to me the principle of fitness or otherwise of souls for undergoing change for the better. Before imparting to any person any teachings in truth or goodness we must make a just estimate of his inherent or acquired capacity and his fitness to assimilate them. He must be served in the path of truth and goodness so far as and to the extent that he is able to benefit by them and no more."

"The great law of evolution is closely connected with the principle of relationship (सम्बन्ध तत्त्व) and on the latter rests the knowledge about the inherent or acquired fitness (अधिकार तत्त्व) of every individual. Hence with the increase of my knowledge about great process of evolution, I acquired and progressed in my knowledge about the law of relationship and law of individual fitness."

"But it is also very necessary to state here that though it is improper according to the law of individual fitness to impart to any one any such knowledge which he is incapable of assimilating or benefiting by, *it can under no circumstances whatsoever be permissible to teach a man to have recourse to falsehood or to impart to him any kind of false teachings or in any other way to propagate falsehood.* Similarly, though under certain conditions it is improper to forgive the guilt of a person or to give charity to him who is not entitled to it, yet *it can never and under no circumstances be permissible to have recourse to any positive wrong or crime or sin in relation to any one.*"



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA

In his birthday robes

1914.

"Being ignorant of the true knowledge about the life of soul, several founders of the various sects or creeds in the world, keeping in view only the worldly profit or loss as the determining motives of action, have given very sinful, criminal and false teachings to their followers in various relations and have thus so damagingly injured the world, that the evil and baneful effects thereof are met with at every corner even to this day. Such teachings imparted in the name of God and religion, instead of relieving the world of sin and crime have aggravated and are still aggravating evil in various ways, and have produced and are producing such horrible results, the sight whereof is simply staggering. The sooner such most destructive teachings about the life of soul are done away with, the better it is for the world."

3. "The need of systematically introducing the observance of *yagyas* in relation to different kingdoms of Nature was very greatly felt by me. The course of giving instructions for the performance of certain duties and abstinence from certain acts in each relation which was laid down by me up to this time covered the following twelve relations :—

1. Relating to parents and children.
2. Relating to brothers and sisters.
3. Relating to husband and wife.
4. Relating to master and servant.
5. Relating to Dev Guru (Bhagwan Dev Atma).
6. Relating to fellow sewaks or members.
7. Relating to neighbours.
8. Relating to one's own country.
9. Relating to mankind.
10. Relating to vegetable kingdom.
11. Relating to animal kingdom.
12. Relating to mineral world.

Besides this, forty rules for performing certain duties and abstaining from certain acts were laid down for the preservation of health of the body and many other instructions were given with regard to getting freedom from those sins and their impurities which man, led by his evil desires and passions, commits in various relations."

4. "I felt the necessity of imparting teachings to some members of the Dev Samaj about the general evolution of man and for that object many sermons were delivered by me for some days on various subjects in the Montgomery Ashram."

These various truths brought about a corresponding change in the ideals and exercises and in the basic teachings of the Dev Samaj. The Dev Samaj as a society thus grew more and more distinct from all the societies of the world.

It was on the 24th May, 1895 that Bhagwan Dev Atma realising the grandeur of the unique and complete soul-life that he had evolved in his unique soul, declared to the world the fact of his being the true worshipful being. This demarcated the Dev Samaj most effectively from all other religious societies of the world. The Dev Samaj as a society came to hold Bhagwan Dev Atma as the only true worshipful being. A regular course of Dev Guru Puja (worship) was introduced in the Dev Samaj which ran as under :—

1. The devotee should cleanse his body and sit erect in a clean, beautiful, attractive place on his seat away from all kinds of interruptions.
2. He should, if occasion permits, take a sip of pure water.
3. He should withdraw his mind from all other sides and busy it in concentration.
4. He should in that mood of concentrated attention think of Bhagwan Dev Atma's soul and develop feeling of reverence for him.
5. He should then repeat *Guru Mantra* for some time and afterwards in all humility prostrate himself and offer homage of heart to Bhagwan and thus make his heart more tender.
6. He should in that illumined and fit condition of heart recite Dev Guru *astotar* with due fervour and love.
7. He should after completing the *astotar*, read slowly and attentively its exposition and feast his mind on the beauties contained therein, develop feelings of gratitude and love by reflecting over the boons received by him at the hands of Bhagwan. He should sing one, two or several hymns and thus strengthen and deepen higher feelings in himself and realise the blessedness and ecstasy of the higher influences which are generated by those feelings.
8. Thus charged with feeling of love and his heart deeply united with the highest life of Bhagwan, he should try to assimilate his *light* and *power*.
9. In the light thus gained, he should try to realise the uniqueness or glory of Bhagwan's highest soul-life or some higher truth which he might have seen.
10. He should then generate in his heart a desire to make some proper sacrifice or do some disinterested service.
11. Feeling himself blessed by these exercises and led by the feeling of victory for Bhagwan, he should enthusiastically sing Dev Guru *Arti*.
12. He should conclude his worship by again offering his heart-felt homage to Bhagwan by prostrating himself and invoking his blessings and receiving his life-giving boons.

This worship by the Dev Samaj of its unique Founder created for many many years a host of enemies against Bhagwan, specially in the ranks of the God-worshippers. The theists felt jubilant that

Bhagwan had given up God-belief as they felt that Bhagwan, otherwise invulnerable, would by his renunciation of God-idea be an easy prey in their hands. They thought that all that was wanted of them was an India-wide propaganda that Bhagwan had no faith in God and the world would set its face against him. This they did with a vehemence which was worthy of a better cause. They took pride in the idea that as they believed in God who was everything infinite, they were better situated than the Dev Samaj which rested solely on Bhagwan Dev Atma—a finite being. But Bhagwan had known, through many years' experience, what God-worship meant for the world. He knew that in spite of his lip-profession man was world-worshipper. He knew that God was a myth. Hence he knew that all that propaganda was bound to fail in affecting his unique personality. A single living dog was better than a thousand dead lions. Even the tiniest thing in universe had more potency than the so-called infinite God. Hence instead of affecting Bhagwan it has now become a very serious question for them (theists) how to safeguard the belief in God. In the bosom of these very theistic societies have risen many a man who does not believe in any God. God-belief has to go. Hence all those societies which are based on God are built on sand. The Dev Samaj is the only religious society built on the bedrock of the one great reality, *i. e.*, Nature. This unshakable foundation it acquired in the year 1895 though its superstructure underwent many changes from time to time.

PROPAGATION OF HIS NEW TEACHINGS BY BHAGWAN.

Much of the time of Bhagwan and his Samaj was taken up in the year 1895 by the civil cases of libel which were pending against him and an old worker of the Dev Samaj. However as the light about the constitution of human soul, its place in Nature, its destiny and its duties towards various kingdoms of Nature dawned on him, Bhagwan set to find *ways and means* to elevate the character of his missionaries by developing noble feelings in them and thus make them very efficient agents in his hands to convey his light and life to others. Bhagwan was now rid of all the so-called supernatural support, help or guidance. The pure facts of human life *revealed to him* the stern reality *that eternal life and progress of every soul was an absolute and delusive myth*. One year ago Bhagwan had built an *ashram* at Montgomery where he had to go for the sake of his health. The eighth anniversary of the Samaj was celebrated there. A great lady worker of the Samaj Shradhya Kumari Dr. Prem Devi who had been suffering from phthisis had also been sent there for her health but breathed her last there on this occasion. It was there that Bhagwan Dev Atma commenced that most monumental work which contained the teachings of the one true religion for all mankind—the Dev Shashtra. Montgomery has, therefore, a name to be treasured up in the annals of the Dev Samaj.

It was at this place—sacred to Dev Samaj—that Bhagwan, after the eighth anniversary was over, formed a class of his disciples and commenced imparting training to them into the new truly religious principles and methods of work that he had discovered. The teachings that he imparted to his disciples mainly concerned (1) the manifestation of man in the course of evolution, (2) his progress from the primitive state to his present civilised condition, (3) the growth of language in man, (4) the growth of imagination to a great extent and of other mental faculties to some extent in man, (5) the origin and growth of belief in him of various gods and goddesses, (6) the origin of sacrifices, prayers and offerings to god in order to appease their wrath or to propitiate them, (7) the nature of the desires for the satisfaction whereof he offered prayers, (8) the origin of man's belief in the departed souls and the belief that elements were gods (and their worship) and gradual evolution of the idea of one God, (9) man's soul—its evolution and dissolution, (10) man's destiny and his duties in different relations.

These teachings gave a new colouring, new tone and new ideal to the Dev Samaj, and its work acquired a new stamp.

The work of the disciples on these new lines made an unexpected progress, as it was in conformity with the laws and facts of Nature. The whole work of the Samaj was newly organised. New fields of work were opened up in various mofussil areas. Each worker had a definite local area within which he had to work and he got help from those Dev Samajists who resided in that locality. The success of Dev Samaj work does not mean a mere change of belief. It means change of hearts. It means a new birth or a new transformation. Not only did many persons give up sins and pledge to permanently refrain from them, but in several cases they returned moneys and things which they had illegally gained from others before they had come in contact with the Dev Samaj. This new feature has characterised the Dev Samaj work since then. There are hundreds of cases in which men besides making various other reparations have returned thousands of rupees to the victims whom they had cheated of those amounts.

Experience also showed Bhagwan that it was *not necessary for every man to give up caste before he could be a member*. To a question "Is it compulsory for a member to abandon caste?" it was said, "No, it is not compulsory. *It is one of the evils that will break down as each member grows in strength. It is not one of the sins which a member has to give up in order to join the society.*"

Besides these changes there was *also another constitutional change by which Bhagwan in order to train up his workers in the management affairs of the Samaj formed a consultative body which gradually evolved into the present Managing Council of the Dev Samaj—its supreme executive body*. In 1891, this Council was formed with no delegated powers. It was very gradually that it

developed into an advisory body which thought out plans of work on points given by the Founder, put them before him and carried out those sanctioned by him.

It may, however, be mentioned here that from 1895 to 1900—a full period of six years—the society had no periodical or publication. Public preaching was mostly dispensed with. The whole work of the Dev Samaj—the work of undermining the deep laid old but strong, foundations of the fiction-grounded false beliefs and faiths, the work of conversion of the heart from sin by creating a living consciousness thereof and hatred for it, the work of diffusing the teachings of *Science-Grounded Religion* and evolving higher and altruistic forces in fit souls—was carried on very quietly by means of private meetings and hand written articles and sermons intended for private circulation among the members and associates. This silent work proved of very great solid worth. Is it not rather strange and sad that the unfavourable conditions created by the theists should have driven the greatest public man of his time to do the most uphill work that had fallen to the lot of any person of any eminence without delivering any public lecture and publishing any periodical? Is it not strange that all this should have happened in the end of the nineteenth century and under the rule of the most enlightened government? It is not that the Dev Samaj did not feel the need of these weapons of propagation, and religious and intellectual warfare. And who could have felt the need of such things more than the Founder of the Dev Samaj who was the greatest Urdu orator of his time and the greatest Urdu journalist in the Punjab? The severe persecutions and hard prosecutions made Bhagwan Dev Atma to take the extreme step of suspending the use of these methods for the time being. Those persons who blindly thought that a society which had no periodical of its own and whose members or workers did not come into the pulpit must have died, grew jubilant at this. They widely circulated the unholy wishes of their heart by propagating far and wide the false news that the Dev Samaj was dead. And yet during those very years, the Dev Samaj made the most wonderful progress. It was during those years that a new feature was added to the work of the Dev Samaj. *It was during this time that the foundation was laid of the educational work of the Dev Samaj which has grown into a very remarkable feature of its work and has added not inconsiderably to the educational progress of our province.*

In 1899, Bhagwan whose Samaj had, in the eyes of the opponents, grown defunct, was in a position to think seriously of starting an educational institution of his own for the children of the society and others who were attracted to its work. There were schools in every town of importance for the intellectual education of the children of the country but there was none which had made the evolution of higher character in students its prime object. Bhagwan whose supreme object of life was the propagation of higher life felt the need of an institution where the children may, on the one hand, be protected from evil rampant in other schools, and on the other, trained

up into boys and girls of character. An institution of this kind needed primarily men of high character who could in all seriousness make the work their own. Bhagwan had through his unique higher influences created sufficient men of character to undertake this arduous task. Though short of funds, he, in the month of October, 1899, ventured to start a mixed school for the education of the boys and girls with separate boarding house arrangements for each at Moga. It was opened by the Founder himself on 29th October 1899 in a hired house with seventeen boys and four girls and two teachers, the lady teacher acting as the Superintendent of the girls' boarding house. It was straightaway named Dev Samaj High School, Moga. It soon grew in numbers. It was felt that as mixed school, it was unmanageable, since no separate and suitable arrangement was available for girls for cookery, needle work, *crucia* and *kashida* work, music, various domestic duties, etc., essential for girls. Hence a separate school for girls was proposed and it was opened in 1901 at Ferozepore. It was also opened by the Founder himself. Who could have ever thought that the school at Moga would be the pioneer of education in the district and the girls' school would be the first Hindu Girls' High School in the province of the Punjab and would be the one institution which would give this great province the first Hindu B. A., B.T., and the first Hindu M.B., B.S., besides serving as an inspiration to other societies to open similar institutions? Even to-day this institution enjoys the supreme trust not only of Dev Samaj parents but also of other Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian parents. The seeds sown in those years developed most remarkably this feature of the Dev Samaj which in itself would require a volume to deal with in detail.

In the year 1901, a monthly journal was started which was edited by Bhagwan Dev Atma himself. It was called Jiwan Path (i.e., path of life). It bore on its title page a Sanskrit saying which meant, "Soul should always be protected." It was a Hindi magazine. Though it was printed and published, its publication was confined only to the members and sympathisers of the Dev Samaj. Its objects would show definitely the nature of the work in which the Dev Samaj was engaged. The four-fold object of this journal was :—

1. To carry the life-giving light and power of Bhagwan Dev Atma to fit souls in order to show to them the true path of higher life.
2. To save them from the sinful courses of life and develop in them a *desire* to evolve higher life.
3. To help them to grow in their hearts various higher and altruistic forces of higher life and thus lead them on to the path of progress in true *Dharma*.
4. To help them to make their lives truly serviceable and useful in various relations of Nature.

For the first time a new definition of what constitutes *Dharma* and what is not *Dharma* was declared by Bhagwan. In the *Jiwan Path* he brought out an article on this subject.

It showed that *there was nothing supernatural or changeless in the universe. All was contained in Nature* and subject to its ceaseless law of change which dominated all existences whether living or non-living, human or sub-human. *Soul of man which was nothing but an organised life-power* in man's being was similarly subject to this all-embracing law. This change was of two kinds :—(1) It was *upward change* which made any object or person better and nobler than before, or (2) the *downward change* which led it to degeneration, decay and ultimate death. This was the basis of religion. Hence *true religion meant evolution of those higher consciousnesses in man which not only awakened him to the horrors of sins and crimes and of the low-loves and low-hates* which led to them, and gave him a deep urge to shake off their control ; *but also awakened him to the beauty of higher forces* and helped him to develop them. Hence liberty or freedom from low-loves and low-hates and evolution of altruistic forces meant religion. The ignorance of this all-prevading fundamental principle had led the founders of various faiths astray and they conceived and taught *Dharma* what in fact was not *Dharma*. For instance :—

1. Some have declared that a certain faith or belief is *Dharma*, such as belief in God, gods and goddesses, their incarnations, prophets, so-called revealed books, etc.

2. Some have declared the observance of external forms as *Dharma*, such as wearing of dress of yellow or ochre or of some other specified colour, keeping long hair or shaving it off completely, bearing certain marks or other symbols on the body, etc.

3. Some have declared pilgrimages to certain so-called sacred places, the sight of certain idols or tombs, and the bathing in certain rivers or ponds as *Dharma*.

4. Some have declared the inhaling or exhaling of air in certain ways and practising of certain postures called *Yogabhyas* as *Dharma*.

5. Some have declared the uttering of certain names or repetition of certain words or phrases, the reading of certain books, offering of flowers, etc. to idols, tombs and the like as *Dharma*.

6. Some have declared the observance of the unnatural and absolutely unsound distinctions of superiority and inferiority on the basis of birth and carrying out of restrictions of food and drink as *Dharma*.

7. Some have declared fasting or taking of only certain kinds of foods on certain occasions as *Dharma*.

8. Some have declared that the performing of certain ceremonies such as those of circumcision, sacred thread wearing, sacrificing certain animals, baptism, etc. is *Dharma* etc., etc.

Thus Bhagwan Dev Atma rid the world of these false consolations of *Dharma* which in fact are stifling life out of him but in which man unfortunately finds his very life breath. All these things made Bhagwan's Samaj more and more singular and altogether different from others. Naturally the object of the Dev Samaj was the only crying need of man, since what humanity in fact wants is not loud or silent prayers to some so-called Father in heavens, slaughter of animals on the most inhuman scale to appease the so-called God, gods and goddesses, or mere parrot-like repetition of a name or *mantra*, bath in this or that river or pond, pilgrimage to any near or distant place, etc. *What the humanity wants is freedom of man from those low-loves and low-hates* which blind him absolutely to the rights and life of others and lead him to go dreadfully wrong in relation to others and commit all those crimes and depredations which demand terrible expenditure on police and military to control them. *What the humanity wants are men of higher life and character who should feel their highest welfare in the service of others. Humanity wants innocent, trustworthy, useful and serviceable people.* It is this great need of humanity that Bhagwan set before the Dev Samaj to satisfy.

The report of the year 1902 shows that fifty-one new members joined the society, and taking into consideration the fact that every member of the Dev Samaj had to give up the illegal means of getting money-theft, robbery, bribes-taking, gambling, withholding of debts and deposits-use of all kinds of intoxicants, flesh-taking, social impurity, etc., and that he had to do some positive acts of service, every member was a splendid asset. Besides this, seventy-nine new sympathisers were initiated. Thus the Dev Samaj had begun to achieve very good results and was producing a leaven in those years of its very quiet work but from which the enemies of the Dev Samaj took false impression that the Society had ceased to exist.

Some idea of the work which Bhagwan did in those days through his Samaj, can be had also from the report of the soul-saving work in the general public. To be a member of the Dev Samaj one had to give up a number of specified sins. But there were people who could not give up all the sins. They could abjure one or other sin and they were persuaded to do so. The report of this kind of work is as follows :—

1. Fifty-five men promised to abstain from taking bribes.
2. Fifty-four persons pledged to give up social impurity.
3. Fifty-two persons were saved from gambling.
4. Fifty-two persons were won over from theft.
5. Fifty persons promised to give up dishonest dealings in money matters.
6. Fifty persons promised to abstain from false evidence.
7. Forty-six persons promised to give up breach of trust.

8. Forty-five persons promised to give up all specified sins.
9. Two hundred and thirteen persons pledged to refrain from one or other intoxicant.
10. One hundred and thirty-eight persons were saved from meat-eating.
11. Two butchers gave up the profession of butchery.
12. Ten persons returned the ill-gotten gains to the rightful owners whom they had cheated.

All this is given at this place to serve as a sample of the work in which Bhagwan was engaged.

IV

FURTHER EVOLUTION OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma left Brahmo Samaj because of two most important reasons. One was that the society of the Brahmo Samaj did not at all aim at evolving new and higher life in those that came under its influence ; and the second was that the constitution of the Brahmo Samaj was utterly defective, not being based on higher principles. This was what Bhagwan had then definitely and most unequivocally impressed upon the Brahmos. It was in the year 1911 that an old Brahmo wrote about the general idea of worship in the Brahmo Samaj in the columns of the *Navaya Bharat* for *Magh*, exactly what Bhagwan had felt when he left Brahmo Samaj and founded his new society, the Dev Samaj. The old Brahmo wrote :—

“ The general idea of worship in the West seems (so far as we can gather from books), ‘ Eat, drink and be merry ’ as Sardanapolus said, but at the same time open the Bible, read a few texts, close your eyes but keep the mind ready to realise in your consciousness some divine elements corresponding to the different ‘ aspects of God ’ as you say. For public worship go to the church, listen to the sermons and ‘ the devotion preached there ’ and think your devotion over, your conscience satisfied, and say your prayers, amidst the din of the jarring elements of contending passions and strife, the clash of divergent interests and the tumultuous noise of busy and clamorous crowds that surround them. *Our worship is very much after this pattern.* ”

It was this mockery in the Brahmo Samaj which had disgusted Bhagwan’s unique heart very much. He founded the Dev Samaj to remove all this farce and make the problem of higher life a practical and serious one for every traveller on the path of religion. Hence, he based his society on spiritual and highly moral foundation. Even the lowest grade member was required to be free from all such gross sins which cling even to some of the greatest leaders of other societies. His missionaries could be only those who could sacrifice their all for his cause and whose lives were by and by elevated under his unique influences. Through these higher souls, Bhagwan communicated higher life to others.

Though the missionaries by carrying the unique higher influences of Bhagwan, brought about wonderful changes of unique character in the lives of others, Bhagwan felt that the Dev Samaj as a vehicle would be more efficient to achieve his object and do real and abiding good, if an institution were established not only for giving a regular, systematic and definite course of training to workers but even for all those fit souls who could spare time to acquire those blessings. Hence on 15th August 1905, Bhagwan

Dev Atma founded a higher Life-Training Academy which is one of its kind in the whole world and which is eloquent testimony of the fact that Dev Samaj is in fact a *Dharmic* Society. This institution is called the Dev Samaj Dharm Vikasalya. On the day it was founded, Bhagwan delivered a most illuminating and interesting sermon. He said that the greatest need of man was to get true knowledge about his inner or soul constitution, its courses, its ideal and its destiny. It was his most essential duty to get freedom from low-loves and low-hates which brought about degradation of human life and its ultimate extinction if that course remained unchecked. It was his supreme duty to develop higher and progressive forces for going forward on the path of higher life. If man neglected all this, he neglected the one thing it was his imperious duty to attend to. To help mankind to realize this one most essential duty in his own relation, the Dev Samaj Higher Life-Training Academy was started.

We have heard of theological seminaries but never of an institution for evolving higher life or for imparting true knowledge of soul.

Two classes for students were opened. Eleven students joined the first class and seven students joined the second class and the noble work of the evolution of true higher life was taken up in hand in right earnest.

In the very first year, this institution produced results which vindicated its beautiful name. An attempt was made to create in souls a consciousness against those inner egoistic powers which consumed, degraded, blinded souls or made them insane. These egoistic powers consist of jealousy, vindictiveness, slander, false estimate of one's self, thinking ill of and wishing ill to others, etc., etc.

Twenty persons out of those who attended as regular or casual students made reparations for their past sins. They returned to the proper owners such amounts which they had got by illegitimate or immoral means from them before they were saved by the unique influences of Bhagwan Dev Atma. This cleansing of life naturally ennobled the souls.

The declarations that were made from time to time by Bhagwan Dev Atma also clearly show what the essential features of his Dev Samaj were and what its nature was. We quote one of such declarations issued in 1912 that pertains to one point, *i.e.*, that the Dev Samaj was in truth a *Dharmic* or spiritual Society.

DECLARATIONS OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

"The Dev Samaj declares that its worshipful Founder, Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan, is the complete personification, teacher and ideal of the *Sattya Dharm* (True Religion). He is the *Dev Atma* or the one in whose soul all the powers of complete higher life have

manifested and evolved. The truths that the enlightened Bhagwan has seen and promulgated relating to the true Nature of *Dharm* and *Adharm*, good and evil actions and their results, worship and the worshipped, organism of human soul, its lower and higher courses, its salvation, its primary and secondary objects of existence, its future life, etc., are quite new and such as no other religious teacher in the past or the present has ever seen and promulgated."

(2)

"The Dev Samaj declares that the teachings of the *Dev Dharm* are science-grounded; and that except *Dev Dharm*, all other systems of the world religions are fiction-grounded, that dissemination by the advocates of the fiction-grounded faiths, of entirely wrong teachings relating to the above problems have done and are doing to this day, incalculable harm to various existences in the animal and human kingdom; that as humanity gets emancipated from these wrong and mythical faiths, they would be saved from the woeful consequences thereof and would harvest much good."

(3)

"The Dev Samaj declares *that it is a truly religious Society* (Samaj) in which forces of higher life, manifested in the Worshipful Founder of *Dev Dharm*, are working; that hundreds of persons have been freed and are being saved through it from various kinds of sins and vices, fiction-grounded faiths, superstitions, etc.; that therein the *Sattya Deva* is worshipped and adored; that therein such religious exercises are performed as, on the one hand, evolve in man higher senses of obtaining true knowledge regarding True Dharm and higher forces, and, on the other, remove the darkness of fictitious faiths and all sorts of sin and wrong; that by practising these devotional and religious exercises man acquires that higher life and its unique blessings which he cannot get otherwise."

(4)

"The Dev Samaj declares, that like all other false beliefs in gods and goddesses, the belief in the existence of one God is *equally* a myth; that His worship is mere fancy; that there is no book written, compiled or revealed by Him, that neither any teachings or injunctions nor any teachers are sent by Him; that the redemption from various kinds of wrong and harmful notions and practices that are entertained and believed in as taught and sanctioned by Him is indispensably necessary; that the Dev Samaj is doing this very important work of redemption."

These declarations conclusively show that Bhagwan succeeded in founding a society which did not merely teach a lip worship or lip profession, leaving the lower life untouched, but *it set before itself the two-fold task of liberating man from various sins and falsehoods in beliefs, etc., and evolving in him here on this earth noble and altruistic forces* and thereby replacing the reign of low-loves and low-hates by the rule of higher loves leading man to wish well and do well to all such existences with which he comes in contact. This two-fold

object of freeing man from the grip of evil and untruth and leading him to truth and goodness made Dev Samaj a unique and blessed society.

Even a short appeal that was made in those early days contains the following paragraph which is characteristic of the work of the Dev Samaj:—

“The Founder of the Dev Samaj teaches that any people, by being slaves to lower desires and passions and thereby drifting on to the lower courses of life, become degenerated and demoralised; that by being capable of evolving higher powers alone, can any people grow in higher life and become really a great and powerful nation. Therefore, the glorious work of imparting light and power of higher life to the almost dead souls of our country-men, which the Dev Samaj is busily engaged in doing, and which practically builds moral character in this country, is simply unique and most beneficent; and those of our countrymen who have a mind to perceive and a heart to feel and appreciate the important and highly beneficent nature of this work, cannot but show their sympathy with and extend pecuniary and other aid to it as far as lies in their power.”

The gross sins which every lowest grade member had to permanently refrain from took a definite shape and for several years they were the following:—

I.—Four sins relating to occupation, *viz.*

- (1) Bribery.
- (2) Weighing or measuring more or less with a motive of cheating.
- (3) Substituting one thing for another with the object of cheating.
- (4) Paying less or receiving more with a view to cheat others, after certain remuneration for certain work or price of a thing has been agreed upon.

II.—Theft.

III.—Suppression of debts and deposits.

IV.—Robbing any person of his money, land or any other article.

V.—Gambling.

VI.—Leading a useless life.

VII.—Adultery or any unnatural crime or marrying again during the life time of one's husband or wife.

VIII.—Using, preparing, cultivating, buying or selling or giving to any person any intoxicant such as wine, opium, *bhang*, tobacco, *charas*, *chandu*, cocaine, etc., for the purpose of intoxication.

IX.—Eating flesh or eggs or any thing made thereof or giving or directing others to eat any such thing.

X.—Killing any sentient being barring certain right occasions.

Besides this, there was also another class formed which went under the name of associates. These associates too had to refrain from five sins, *i.e.*, bribery, theft, drinking, flesh-eating and gambling. They had to contribute something annually.

This was the minimum standard of moral character demanded of the lowest grade members by a society which believed in no God of any denomination or of any kind, which was definitely atheistical though in truth positively religious. No theistic society in the world believing in God of infinite powers has ever dared to keep such a minimum standard of moral life as necessary for every member. Even after the Dev Samaj has shown the way, no theistic denomination has ventured to imitate it. Those theists, therefore, who thought that as soon as they had widely circulated the news that Bhagwan Dev Atma had given up the belief in God, no body would see his face even, had to suffer terrible disillusionment when they saw that Bhagwan Dev Atma instead of making admission into his Society easy, made it most difficult and even then hundreds profited by his influences, and his society went on swelling in numbers and in all other ways. Does not this connote the wonderful Divine manifestation of the powers or *Dev Shakties* of Bhagwan Dev Atma and the unique ideal of his life and work?

As a contrast to this achievement of Bhagwan, let us read the following paragraph in the 'History of Brahmo Samaj' which would tell its own tale. On page 265 of volume II of this book, Pandit Shivnath Shastri, M.A., Missionary of Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, wrote:—

"The earnest pleadings of the members of the Samaj on behalf of social purity and temperance have also been incessant, and their papers have systematically advocated these causes. Their feeling on the temperance question is so strong, that once a *proposal was earnestly discussed* at the meeting of their General Committee about laying down a rule to *refuse the rights of membership to or exclude from the Samaj all persons who indulge in wine*, without medical certificate, the majority declared in favour of advancing temperance rather by social opinion than by preventive legislation and the proposed resolution was withdrawn." *Italics are ours.*

Mere giving up of one of the intoxicants could not be enforced in Brahmo Samaj while Bhagwan enforced in his Society not only giving up of *all* intoxicants but nine other sins as well.

THE CREED OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

Though the Dev Samaj had from time to time published declarations about its religious beliefs and practices, and the philosophical truths discovered and taught by its worshipful Founder had also been published in books several years before, the creed of the Dev Samaj was not definitely formulated. An impression got current in the circle

of the Dev Samaj that all that the Samaj was concerned with was the evolution of higher character and that it had no special creed of its own. This was a peculiarly anomalous condition for any religious society. Even political parties have their creeds. It is the uniformity of belief and path of life which binds a society into an organised body. Gradually it was by mere accident that Bhagwan came to know about this impression in the body of the Dev Samaj. He was naturally amazed to learn that his followers should have fallen into this error. In the year 1917 or thereabout he therefore published in a concrete and definite form the One, True, Universal Science-Grounded religious creed of the Dev Samaj. We publish it here (*Vide* S. G. R. for January 1918) to give our readers an idea of how higher life was made a question of life and death of man. In the whole creed nowhere do we find any fiction which has been the graveyard of souls—the fiction of pardons, recommendations, mediations, hopes of sensual and sensual joys, etc., or such other degrading temptations in heavens or blood-curdling though to imaginay fear of tortures of hells. As we require no outward temptation or threat to make us eat, drink, breathe, etc., in the same way, in Bhagwan Dev Atma's creed no such external temptation or threat was held forth to induce man to lead a virtuous life :—

THE ONE, TRUE, UNIVERSAL,
SCIENCE-GROUNDED RELIGIOUS CREED
OF THE DEV SAMAJ

1—The Universe.

The Universe—the sum total of all existences composed of force and matter—is

- (1) eternal and self-existing ;
- (2) in constant change on account of its own forces, thereby producing, on the one hand, higher or evolutionary change, and on the other, degrading or dissolutionary change in its different parts ;
- (3) changing according to its own invariable modes or methods, called its laws ; and
- (4) the only real existence and the true and sure foundation for all true knowledge that man is capable of attaining.

2—The Man.

1. Man is composed of
 - (a) An organic life-force called Soul,
 - (b) A physical organism called the body.
2. This organic life-force or soul in man is
 - (a) the builder, preserver and mover of its organized material body, and the most essential part in its existence ;
 - (b) incapable of maintaining its organic being, without its physical organism ;

(c) capable of surviving after the death of its gross body, by building a similar but refined material body under certain necessary conditions ;

(d) subject to the universal law of change leading either to its growth, degeneration, decay or death according as the working of its inner thoughts and outer actions are right or wrong in relation to other existences of the universe of which it is a part ;

(e) actuated by its various forces called feelings—the intellectual and physical powers can do nothing better than simply co-operating with them ;

(f) bound to go right or wrong according to its right or wrong moving feelings in relation to other beings.

(g) unable to stop or change its wrong motions, if it is overpowered by wrong feelings—even when knowing them to be so ; and

(h) capable of being turned from the wrong course of any of its (wrong) feelings and developing in it entirely new or benevolent feelings, provided that it is fit to receive and gets an opportunity of receiving in a proper measure the higher vibrations of some one who possesses those higher feelings that are required to effect the above higher changes.

3—The primary and essential duty of man.

The primary and essential duty of man is the attainment of

1. true knowledge regarding the organism of his soul and the laws governing its growth, decay and death ;

2. salvation from

(a) false faiths and darkness of ignorance regarding his soul organism, its growth, decay and death ;

(b) the slavery to his degrading feelings and the evil effects thereof ;

3. evolution of life-promoting higher feelings that constitute the *Dharmic* or higher life.

4—The Dev Atma.

Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan (the Founder of the Dev Samaj and the system of Science-grounded Religion known as *Dev Dharm*) is the highest and the complete soul-organism (Dev Atma) who has appeared in the human world in the evolutionary course of Nature and has developed in Him the unique psychic powers (*Dev Shakties*). namely :—

(1) Complete or all-sided love or attraction for goodness and truth, and

(2) Complete or all-sided hatred or repulsion for every sin, evil, impurity, wrong attachment and falsehood,

by making every requisite sacrifice for the preservation and development of his aforesaid unique powers.

He has thereby evolved in him

(a) Unique psychic Light (*Dev Joti*) which enlightens the minds of fit souls and enables them to see their wrong beliefs, wrong thoughts and their wrong acts as wrong and harmful, and perceive truths regarding the organism, life and death of their souls.

(b) Unique psychic Power (*Dev Tej*) which produces in the heart of fit souls, repulsion and pain for their wrong deeds and thoughts and their impurities, and gives them freedom or salvation therefrom and evolves altruistic higher feelings in them.

By virtue of the aforesaid unique powers and by attaining harmony with the evolutionary course of Nature, he, the Dev Atma, is for all *adhikari* or fit persons :—

(a) The one true Teacher of truths of the One, True, Universal and Science-grounded Religion ;

(b) The One True and Highest Worshipful Being ;

(c) The One True Highest Emancipator from soul-darkness, false religious faiths, sins and other wrong and degrading motions of life ;

(d) The One True and Highest Evolver of Higher or *Dharmic* life.

The definite declaration of this otherwise implied creed of the Dev Samaj, demarcated it from all the so-called religious cults of the world. This creed more than anything else shed the most brilliant light upon what the Dev Samaj believed as salvation and higher evolution of soul. The salvation was declared to be emancipation from wrong beliefs, wrong feelings, their wrong motions and impurities. The declaration that it was impossible for soul to exist at any time without body, exploded for all times the theory of the transmigration of soul. Hence Hindu and Buddhistic conceptions of salvation of soul as consisting in freedom from rebirths were thus shown to be absurd. Having abolished belief in God and His imaginary heavens and hells, Bhagwan Dev Atma cleared the Dharma of all such absurd fancies of salvation or escape from the so-called hells and of all low motives which the different religions raised in the hearts of their followers to expect in the so-called heaven.

The one eternal song of Bhagwan's teachings was to produce in fit souls a desire for freedom and true liberty from soul-darkness and low-loves and low-hates and evolve in them higher forces. *The salvation was from lower life and evolution was in higher life.* If the world religions have utterly ignored one thing it is that, and it is because of the ignorance of and indifference to this great work that their centuries of their labours have not succeeded in expelling from this world even some or all those ten gross sins which every member of the Dev Samaj pledges to permanently refrain from.

But though the creed was declared, the old convention still persisted in, and all that was required of a member was the renunciation of ten sins and reverence for Bhagwan Dev Atma. The belief in Bhagwan as the only worshipful Being was not enforced. Hence even such souls were admitted into the Dev Samaj who were not free from belief in gods and goddesses or the so-called one God. All the journals of the Dev Samaj publicly exposed the absurdity of beliefs in them. From the platform of the Dev Samaj most reasoned out attacks were made on these false faiths. From the house tops did the Dev Samaj declare that its highest worshipful Being was none other than Bhagwan Dev Atma, and all the so-called worshipful beings believed to be as such were not worthy of worship. But because renunciation of all false religious beliefs was not made a necessary condition of membership, the workers did not devote their energies to liberate, *in the first instance*, as they do now, all candidates from their slavery to various false beliefs in the name of religion, though they applied themselves heart and soul to liberate fit souls from ten gross sins. As the minds of several members did not very clearly comprehend the most grievous harm which these false religious faiths had done to humanity and the most stubborn obstacle that they were still proving to the propagation of the true religion—the *Dev Dharma*—they could not in the very nature of things give their whole heart to the removal of these false faiths. Hence the Dev Samaj which was a truly religious society and devoted to the service of truth and goodness could not function vigorously so long as it did not shake off all traces of false religious faiths from its fold. Bhagwan Dev Atma, who very keenly felt the horrible consequences of these false faiths, ultimately made the belief in the creed of the Dev Samaj as compulsory for admission into the Dev Samaj as renunciation of ten sins was. He knew that a good number of the members would fall off by such a step but he never cared for numbers. Hence in the present constitution of the Dev Samaj he has kept the belief in the Dev Samaj creed compulsory even for the sympathisers of the lowest grade.

The rules that prevail now relating to the admission into membership of the Dev Samaj and continuance therein, are as under;—

“Those persons only would be considered qualified to be admitted into the Dev Samaj as its lowest grade members who:—

I—In relation to Bhagwan Dev Atma.

Abjure all beliefs in and worship of all and every kind of false worshipful Beings, and accept and believe in the truth of the following *Mul Vakya* or fundamental formulæ of the Dev Samaj:—

एको हि देवात्मा सत्य देवः,
 स देव न्योतिर्तेजश्च सूर्यः;
 स एव एकः सद्धर्म शिक्त्वा,
 सर्वान् आत्मिक कल्याण कर्ता ।

Translation—Dev Atma is the One and the only true *Dev* or worshipful Being ; true spiritual Sun, emitting the highest psychic *Joti* (light) and highest psychic *Tej* (energy), the one True Teacher of *Sattya Dharm* (true religion) and the One True and Highest Benefactor for all fit souls.

II—In relation to sinful acts.

Have given up the following eight sins at least for the three months previous to their admission and pledge to refrain from them in the future :—

EIGHT SPECIFIED SINS.

1. Taking of all intoxicants, *viz.*, spirituous liquors, opium, *bhang*, tobacco, *charas*, *chandu*, cocaine, etc., or giving any of them to others directly or through any other person except when medically required to do so.

2. Taking flesh or eggs or anything made of them or giving them to others for eating directly or through any other person.

3. Gambling or abetting others to gamble.

4. Theft or its abetment.

5. Bribes-taking.

6. Suppressing debts or deposits or refusing to return them when able to do so ; refusing to pay any promised subscription or donation to a good cause when one is able to pay it, and refusing to pay the stipulated price of anything purchased.

7. Adultery or its abetment or marrying again during the life-time, on this earth, of a husband or wife.

8. Knowingly killing any sentient being except when obliged to do so in case of self preservation or defence.

III—In relation to good conduct.

Knowing it as a fact that man grows higher and better by doing good deeds, shall pledge to do the following good deeds at least :—

1. Attending as far as possible the Birthday Anniversary of Bhagwan Dev Atma or the *Mahotsab* of the Dev Samaj.

2. Showing due respect to Bhagwan Dev Atma and all other elders, *i.e.*, to bow before them to mention their name with due regard to their position, and to talk about anything relation to them with due respect, and inculcating the same feeling in the hearts of one's family members.

3. Attending as far as possible all such meetings of the Dev Samaj which they are required to attend.

4. Taking as far as possible one's family members also to the meetings of the Dev Samaj, so that they too, may, as far as they can, profit by the higher influences of such meetings.

IV—In relation to Niyat Dan or annual subscription.

Shall abide by the following rules relating to *Niyat Dan* (fixed annual subscription) etc. :—

1. To pay at least Rs. 5 or in special case Re. 1 as their *Niyat Dan* or fixed annual subscription for the promotion of various benevolent activities of the Dev Samaj.

2. To pay this subscription as early as possible but in any case within that year.

3. To pay as early as possible or at least within that year any other subscription or donation promised in aid of any other fund of the Dev Samaj.

4. To pay in advance the subscription of any paper of the Dev Samaj to which they may be subscribers, or as early as possible within the year concerned.

The persons thus admitted as members will continue to be as such so long as they do not violate any of the above pledges, or do not commit any such improper act in relation to Bhagwan Dev Atma and the Dev Samaj which in the opinion of the Dev Samaj Managing Council offends against the prestige or good name of the Dev Samaj and thus disqualifies them from remaining members of the Dev Samaj.

Besides the members of the Dev Samaj, the following persons are called sympathizers of the higher and lower grade,—

Only such persons will be admitted as sympathisers of the higher or second grade :—

1. Who believe in Bhagwan Dev Atma as the only true worshipful Being according to the fundamental formulæ of the Dev Samaj.

2. Who have some desire to profit by the higher *Sangat* (influences) of the Dev Samaj.

3. Who are free for the last two months at least and pledge to remain free in future also, from the sins of flesh-taking, drinking, adultery and theft.

4. Who pledge to pay at least Rs. 3 per annum or in special cases Re. 1 to the Dev Samaj.

But those who besides fulfilling the above first two conditions, pledge to refrain from theft and adultery and undertake to contribute Rs. 2 per annum or in special cases Re. 1 to the Dev Samaj will be qualified to be enrolled as sympathizers of the first or lower grade.

Thus we see that even in the case of the lowest grade members or even lower grade sympathisers both creed and better life are enforced. Even the lower grade sympathizers are to be free from theft and adultery. While the lowest grade members of Dev Samaj are free from those 8 gross sins which have been and are the besetting

weaknesses of some of the greatest leaders of several theistic societies, even some of the founders of the various theistic denominations were addicted to one or more of these sins.

CONSTITUTION OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

We have shown that even the lowest grade member of the Dev Samaj is required, besides believing in the science-grounded creed of the Dev Samaj, to renounce eight specified gross sins including all kinds of intoxicants, flesh-eating, suppression of debts and deposits, bribes-taking, etc., etc. With him religion always means better and higher life.

The constitution of the Dev Samaj that Bhagwan built regularly and systematically, manifests the same scrupulous regard for higher life being the true and fundamental basis of the Samajic constitution.

The constitution of the Dev Samaj, like a human organism, consists of various interrelated organs. As major organs of various kinds exist and function for keeping alive and protecting and developing human body, in the same way, various departments of the Dev Samaj are brought into being for the sole object of keeping alive, protecting and evolving the samajic organism. In order to efficiently work and manage these departments, besides the various office-bearers and workers of the Dev Samaj, the Dev Samaj Managing Council and the Representative Body, form the major functioning parts of its entire constitution.

The Dev Samaj Pratinidhi Sabha or its Representative Assembly.

This body consists of twenty-four to forty representatives who are annually returned by members who possess the right of vote. *The right of vote is allowed only to Sewakari Sewaks, i. e., members who are promoted to higher grades on the basis of progress in their higher life and their practical service to the Samaj and its institutions.* Half of the members have to be returned from the highest grade of workers and the remaining half from the highest grade of the members. Hence, *only such persons are eligible for membership of this Body who besides being free from the specified sins, are possessed of better and serviceable life.*

This is a very important body. Hence only persons having higher life can discharge the duties concerning the Samajic work primarily based on higher life. The most important duties of this Sabha are:—

1. To make interpellations from the Dev Samaj Managing Council regarding the periodical reports of the work of the various departments of the Dev Samaj and other matters concerning it.

2. To propose and pass with the object of promoting real good of the Dev Samaj, any resolution, on the basis of any periodical

report of the Dev Samaj or otherwise, in order to *remove any defect* or bring about any betterment in any institution of the Samaj.

3. To propose and pass any resolution concerning any such act of any office-bearer of the Dev Samaj which may be proving materially *harmful* to the Samaj.

4. To propose and pass on the basis of the fundamental registered laws of the Dev Samaj, any resolution (with the object of real good of the Samaj) to bring about any change in the existing rules or bye-laws of the Dev Samaj or to introduce any new rule or bye-law.

Ordinarily three sessions of this Sabha are held during the Samajic year.

The Dev Samaj Managing Council.

In order to manage and control the work of the various departments of the Dev Samaj, there is an executive body called the Dev Samaj Managing Council. It consists of at least five members. These members are all from amongst the very high grades of the society. They are the best trusted Sewaks of Bhagwan and most suited to efficiently discharge the unique work of the Dev Samaj. In the first instance, they have been nominated by Bhagwan Dev Atma. If any member resigns or dies or is removed, the nomination rests with the remaining members of the Managing Council who however are required to submit the name of their nominee for approval to the Pratinidhi Sabha; and till such approval is obtained no person can be appointed as a member of the Managing Body.

Throughout the constitution, Bhagwan has kept the traits of higher life foremost, and above the qualifications of wealth and position. A society that has for its supreme object the service of the cause of truth and goodness, could not in the nature of things give higher place to wordly gains, *i. e.*, wealth and worldly position. The government in Dev Samaj shall be the government by higher and better people. Hence all that is good in the democratic idea of government is retained but purged of all its weak points. Every member is not entitled to vote, but it is, very better and serviceable member who is given a vote. Again every voter is not entitled to stand as a candidate for Legislature, but the candidature is open to the highest and the most useful and serviceable members only. Though members of the Representative body are annually elected, the members of the Dev Samaj Managing Council form a permanent cabinet. This cabinet or the executive body of the Samaj is above all party considerations. In fact, there is no room for party rule in the Samaj. But in democratic institutions the cabinet represents the majority party. In the Dev Samaj, the cabinet is a fixed body which is, however, answerable to the representative body for all its actions.

Thus we can see that the government by the good is the idea

that has been kept foremost by Bhagwan Dev Atma in Dev Samaj constitution.

FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTS OF THE DEV SAMAJ.

Bhagwan Dev Atma had founded the Dev Samaj with the sole object that it may, as far as possible, prove an efficient vehicle for the fulfilment of his mission. It was with this object that at several stages of its existence and according to his growing experience, he introduced various changes making it more and more fit to achieve that object. The definite and final form that was given to these objects by Bhagwan Dev Atma and which are now duly registered under the Societies Registration Act as the fundamental objects of the Dev Samaj and which are to remain as such for all times are as under :—

Fundamental objects of the Dev Samaj.

First Oject.

To propagate among all classes of people outside the Dev Samaj irrespective of any consideration of their country, creed caste or colour through its capable and, as far as possible, its certificated workers, all and every one of the truths concerning the fundamental formulæ of the Dev Samaj relating to Bagwan Dev Atma, *i.e.*

1. Propagating truths relating to the unique manifestation of Bhagwan Dev Atma, his unique *Dev Shakties* and their resultant Dev Joti (*i.e.*, unique psychic light) and Dev Tej (*i.e.*, unique psychic power) and declaring this all important truth that Bhagwan Dev Atma is because of his unique *Dev Shakties* the true *Sattya Dev*, and he is the only true worshipful being for all fit persons of the whole world, and none else is a *Sattya Dev* or true worshipful Being.

2. Liberating fit persons from the belief in and worship of all kinds of the so-called deities, gods or goddesses, and all other worshipful Beings devoid of the above mentioned *Dev Shakties*.

3. Imparting to all fit persons the true knowledge relating to *Dharma* based on the teachings of the latest edition of the *Dev Shashtra* written by Bhagwan Dev Atma, and making this truth definitely clear to them that

- (a) all knowledge relating to the nature and organism of soul,
- (b) its degeneration,
- (c) the causes and the most harmful consequences of such degeneration,
- (d) the true laws of liberation therefrom,
- (e) the need of growth and development of higher life-pro-

ducing forces or feelings in one's soul and the true laws for evolving such feelings,

constitute the knowledge of true *Dharma*. And save and except true *Dharma*, all the teachings that go under the name of religion anywhere and in any form among mankind, are fiction-grounded and false.

4. Liberating fit persons from at least all such sins, freedom and pledging to refrain permanently from which, can alone qualify a man for admission into the Dev Samaj as its member ; and admitting into the Dev Samaj, as its members, such of the persons from amongst them, who may be able to fulfil the necessary conditions of membership of the Dev Samaj, and who may consider admission therein as their supreme privilege. And admitting such persons as sympathizers of the Dev Samaj who may be desirous of becoming as such after fulfilling the necessary conditions thereof.

5. Exposing the falsity of the fiction-grounded and false teachings in vogue among mankind in the name of religion by carrying to the hearts of fit persons, the Dev Joti (highest psychic light) of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and demolishing, by means of pen and word of mouth in polite language, all kinds of false beliefs and faiths that go under the name of religion, and liberating fit persons from their grip.

6. Enabling such persons from amongst the regularly initiated sympathizers of the Dev Samaj who may be fit to attain the higher privilege of its membership, to become its members.

7. Endeavouring to enrol into the Dev Samaj as members or sympathizers such of the relatives of the regular members of the Dev Samaj who are fit to be so enrolled.

8. Exposing thoroughly by means of pen and word of mouth or by both all such falsehoods as have been or may be circulated by hostile persons against the life-mission of Bhagwan Dev Atma, his unique teachings of true *Dharam* and his unique Dev Samaj, and whereby they create or have created false notions amongst people, and thus commit or have committed the most heinous sin of creating hatred in their hearts against Bhagwan Dev Atma ; and further liberating mankind and protecting them, as far as possible from the obnoxious and poisonous influences of the sinful doings of such evil persons.

SECOND OBJECT.

For the betterment of those persons who have been initiated into the Dev Samaj :—

1. To endeavour to eradicate from their hearts as far as possible such egoistic forces as vanity, hatred, self-will and selfishness and to impress upon their mind the necessity of living in and growing higher and nobler by means of such life-promoting atmosphere of Dev Samaj as is charged with the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma and to create and develop in them a strong attraction for the same.

2. To evolve in fit persons, as far as possible, any of such altruistic feelings as true faith, reverence, gratitude, etc., whereby they can establish spiritual union with Bhagwan Dev Atma and perform his true worship, and thereby creating in them, as far as possible, a habit or disposition to perform His true spiritual worship.

3. To impart to fit persons from amongst them, according to their capacity, the teachings of every part of the latest edition of the *Dev Shastra* written by Bhagwan Dev Atma.

4. So far as their capacities admit :—

(a) To awaken and develop in them true sense or consciousness and repulsion for various other sins, and to liberate and purify their souls by growing in them higher sense of true reparation for removing the ill-effects of their past sin or sins.

(b) To liberate them from all sinful and mythical *anusthans* (rites and ceremonies) and to enable them to accept and perform beneficial ceremonies according to the Dev Samaj code of rites.

(c) To liberate them from the bondage of all kinds of prevalent false caste distinctions, and all sinful and false customs such as undue *purdah* by women, undue restrictions to the remarriage of widows, extravagant expenses on the occasions of marriages and deaths, undue lamentations or *syapa* on death occasions, etc.

5. To create in fit persons from amongst them, consciousness against various kinds of acts of intemperance, and to make them temperate by liberating them from their grip.

6. To create in fit persons from amongst them the most essential feeling of due respect for others and thereby liberate them from the life of bad manners and make them well behaved persons.

7. To grow in fit persons from amongst them higher feelings of (a) cleanliness, (b) orderliness, (c) beauty, (d) punctuality, (e) duty, (f) discipline, (g) love of organisation, (h) self-respect, (i) self-help, (j) self-reliance, (k) social service ; and thereby to create and develop in them higher character, and to make them trustworthy persons and men of higher calibre by such development.

8. To develop as far as possible, in fit persons feeling of selfless service of human, animal, vegetable and mineral worlds.

THIRD OBJECT.

In order to preserve and promote the existing benevolent institutions of the Dev Samaj and to found other similar institutions :—

1. To substantially and appreciably improve the condition of the various funds of the Dev Samaj every year.

2. To make such institutions of the Dev Samaj good centres for the propagation of true religion of *Dev Dharm* and to enable fit

persons in these institutions to become members or sympathisers of the Dev Samaj.

3. To find out and train such duty and progress-loving persons as are needed for the progress of all kinds of the institutions of Dev Samaj.

4. To appoint for the efficient working of these institutions, as far as possible, only such persons as possess sense of duty and love for progress.

FOURTH OBJECT.

For due progress of all the benevolent activities of the Dev Samaj :—

1. To start and organise when necessity arises, such papers or journals, and in such languages as are considered necessary for the Dev Samaj.

2. To train capable persons to compile, write or edit all such various books in various languages as are required for the Dev Samaj.

3. To found such necessary institutions as can turn out self-sacrificing and self-surrendering workers for the promotion of the heart-changing department of the Dev Samaj.

4. To devise and carry out all such various kinds of right means and ways as are incidental to the promotion of the above object.

CONCLUSION.

The fundamental objects mentioned above cannot possibly be realised without an organisation based on higher or *Dharmic* conditions. The entire superstructure of his society Bhagwan Dev Atma built on higher life, subordinating to it wealth, education, worldly position, etc. Thus truly higher men occupy higher position in it, and its graded series of classes or *shrenies* yield higher men for higher work on better scale.

PART VI
RENUNCIATION OF BELIEF IN GOD.

INTRODUCTION.

Bhagwan Dev Atma embraced his unique life-vow in 1882. This opened a new and wonderful chapter in his life. None of the worldly objects—*i.e.*, wealth, name, fame, worldly position, bodily or other comforts—constituted the supreme ideal of his life. "But," says Bhagwan Dev Atma, "being a lover of Truth and Goodness, the supreme ideal of my life was to evolve the highest psychic forces in my soul and impart the blessings of this my evolved higher life to other souls,"

Though it was a fact that after millions of years of Nature's struggles, Bhagwan received in the course of human evolution, the hereditary germs of those highest psychic powers of complete and all-sided love of Truth and Goodness, which he evolved in suitable environments by making unique sacrifices and self-surrenders, it never occurred to him then and for years thereafter that his uniqueness consisted in his own powers and not in his fancied God. God was and is being believed by millions of people. But these millions of people being devoid of those highest unique forces which have manifested themselves in Bhagwan, in spite of their worship of God, not only did not live the life Bhagwan lived, but failed even to appreciate the glory of Bhagwan's higher life. Nay, their lower forces of life, which dominated their hearts, naturally clouded their vision and they felt Bhagwan a stranger so far as their experiences went, and hence bewildered them and in many cases they felt repulsion for him. Such a phenomenon was and is inevitable in the case of two lives diametrically opposed to each other. Life of low-loves and low-hates in its very constitution has nothing common with life of higher loves, and above all, with life attuned to the most melodious harmony of all Truth and Goodness.

Says Bhagwan in chapter eleventh of his *Autobiography*, Volume I :—

"As that marvellous Himalayan antelope in whose navel musk is developed, does not know the fact that this musk is the direct result of its heredity and suitable environments in Nature ; in the same way for years together I was not aware of the fact that the constant urges towards higher modes of life, which I felt within me, were not the result of the whispers of some all-knowing being called God, but they were the direct result of the highest psychic forces within me ; and that all the sacrifices which I readily made in the cause of Truth and Goodness were due to the fact that I possessed love for them."

"Being unaware of this fact for many years, I felt God to be the highest saviour and evolver of every human soul. Hence it was my daily practice to develop in my heart more and more love and worship of that Being, and respond to the urge of that love, and considering that urge to be nothing else but call from that Being, I made all possible sacrifices and self-surrenders. Strenuously I

laboured to save human souls taking them to be children of God from the path of sin and to wickedness and develop higher life in them. In this work of service I faced various kinds of persecutions at the hands of the partisans of untruth and wrong ; and devoted myself wholesale to various activities conducive to the highest welfare of others."

"In order to develop and deepen this love for God, I used to devote some hours daily—many times three or four hours—to His worship. In such worship, I dwelt upon His glory and greatness and concentrated my attention on the imagined beauteous form of that Being. By such an exercise I excited feelings of attraction and love for that person, strengthened the feeling of gratitude in His relation as the author and source of all mercy and goodness ; prayed to Him for the removal of any short-comings in me and the development of higher forces in me ; and sang such hymns as proved helpful in deepening these feelings. And when others happened to be present in those devotional meetings, I used to deliver sermons about one or other phase of soul-life for their good. Such religious exercises were held not only during day time, but several times at night also. For a long time *every Wednesday night* such devotional meetings were held as were called *Ishq-i-Illahi ke Jalse* (congregations for promoting love for God) which lasted in some cases the whole night."

In these most deeply devotional gatherings Bhagwan used to be carried away by his ecstasy of feelings so much so that he would sometimes dance through sheer fervour, sometimes laugh out of the fullness of his heart, sometimes burst into tears, and more frequently give extempore addresses to rouse the congregation to the pitch of his most ardent enthusiasm and fervid devotion.

A man may ask, if God-belief is a myth (as no such being really exists at all) how is it that the devotion of God awakened such ardour and such ecstasy, such noble sentiments for the good of others in Bhagwan's heart. Let Bhagwan himself reply to this question :—

"By mere imagination alone one can awaken the feelings which are present in him. Those who have an experience of a sour thing can revive that experience by merely imagining the presence in their mouth of a sour thing. Men or women possessing the passion of lust, feel sexually excited merely by reading a tale in that connection or by thinking of an imaginary woman or man. Those who possess fear of snake are frightened when they wrongly take a rope to be a snake. The fancied belief of hobgoblin make a child dread it in a dark room. Leaving aside the wakeful state, hundreds of people get the satisfaction of their lust and even wet dreams by an imaginary sexual intercourse in sleep. During sleep a man dreaming of an attack made on him by a lion, feels afraid and awakens from his deep slumber screaming or crying. A man possessing the feeling of revenge is charged with hatred for his enemy, even if he simply recalls his face in imagination. A man possessing the feeling of self-esteem feels repulsion for, and gets excited even revenge on a person if anybody even falsely



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tells him that that person was traducing his name. This subterfuge is resorted to by several people to destroy sweet relation of two friends and they succeed in making them each other's enemies.

"But *this faculty of imagination has its own limitations.* (1) *It can excite man's feelings only and* (2) *It can excite only feelings as are already present in man and cannot rouse feelings not possessed by him.* The picture of the beautiful fairies of the *Durbar* of Indra can rouse the sexual passion of those people only, who possess that feeling and who can picture the beautiful form of a fairy in their mind. Similarly the all-good and all-merciful nature of the so-called God can touch the heart of and influence only such souls, who, not only can mentally form, to some extent, the beautiful conception of these qualities but who possess some higher attraction for these altruistic feelings in their own heart, otherwise not." (*Ibid.*)

Bhagwan possessed the hereditary forces of love of truth and goodness. He awakened these various forces in himself by imagining God to be an embodiment of truth and goodness. When these forces were excited in Bhagwan, they filled his heart with a unique and blessed light and power which they remitted. This unique light and this unique power Bhagwan believed to be the manifestation of God in his heart. This unique light and this unique power he also believed and thought to be *darshan* (vision) of God and communion with him. This unique light used to reveal to Bhagwan many a rare truth regarding higher and lower life and their fruits and the supreme ideal of man. Bhagwan expounded these truths by means of some parable or some every-day instance of life and he couched them in the form of a sermon or prayer or praise to his God etc. That most memorable book called *Ruhani Zindagi* which ran into five volumes, contained mostly those sermons, speeches, prayers etc., embodying truths which were revealed to Bhagwan by the manifestation of that unique light in him. Bhagwan also believed and taught that all the higher impulses or urges which he felt, in fact were the direct result of his various higher forces as so many divine commandments were laid upon him by his God which he heard through his conscience.

"The very imperfect knowledge that I possessed then about the constitution of soul," says Bhagwan, "and the influence that several other erroneous beliefs had over my mind, made me believe that I had direct vision of God, that I directly heard His commandments and that I had direct contact with Him. I considered such a state of my heart as the state of supreme blessed realisation of God himself. Seeing my own heart full of unique light and unique power, I felt immensely blessed and gratified. I feasted on the joys of supreme felicity and rare peace of mind. In comparison to this state of heart, I considered all the gains and joys of the world including the crown and sovereignty or all positions and dignities of this earth to be too low and too contemptible and even harmful. In all this drama of life, the one thing which was true and real was the existence in my soul of the highest soul powers of love for truth and goodness and the ocular vision of God, the revelation of

His 'commandments and His direct touch, were wrong readings of the above fact and hence they were all mal-observations." (Chap. XI of *Autobiography* Volume I).

This misconception very gradually cleared in his mind and appeared to Bhagwan in its true colours. It required any amount of experience and exercise of logical faculties, all led by love of truth, which at first created a doubt in Bhagwan about the very existence of God and which made him to pass through great mental travails, till he reached the firm and rocky ground of certainty and reality and gave up this belief altogether. The history of the various stages through which Bhagwan passed from the whole-hearted and absolutely devoted worship of God as a creator, sustainer, organiser and mainstay of everything in the universe, to the highest state of realising nature to be the only reality and the idea of God a huge myth, will form the burden of this part of Bhagwan's life.

REAL HIGHER CHARACTER PREFERRED TO MERE BELIEF IN GOD.

At the time of taking up his unique life-vow, Bhagwan was the most devout and fervent, most sincere and single-minded devotee of the so-called God. In fact the most effective factor which determined the taking up of his unique life-vow, was his belief in ~~the~~ special dispensation of God. He believed that God made a call on him to give up his all for the life-vow. Some idea of his devotional attitude towards the so-called God can be gauged from the following paras taken from his *Autobiography*, Volume I, Chapter VIII :—

“Not only did I cherish deep faith in God but believing him to be an embodiment of all truth and all goodness, I had become his greatest devotee or true *Bhakta*. Out of the deepest feeling of love and devotion, I used to devote myself to his worship. Finding all around the reign of untruth and evil, I realised Him and Him alone as the one supreme refuge, highest protector, supreme friend and supreme support of my soul. When my uncompromising championship of the cause of truth and goodness, made me an object of hatred for others ; when I saw my opponents persecuting me and inflicting pain on me ; when in return for the good that I did to others, I got evil from them ; when I felt depressed and downhearted ; when I felt seriously ill or when any calamity befell me ; when I witnessed myself all alone and utterly friendless, I trusted, according to this deep but totally wrong belief I held then, on God as the one unfailing prop of my life. I felt it my bounden duty to give up my own will and merge it in His will, and to dissociate myself from all others and harmonise my own life only with His commandments.”

This was the height and the depth of Bhagwan's love and devotion for the so-called God. But the very life-vow of Bhagwan possessed within it the sure promise of his ultimately directing the unique light of the unique forces of his love of truth on this belief too, and on seeing and realising the huge error involved in this misconception to supplant it root and branch.

Only a month after he embraced his unique life-vow, Bhagwan Dev Atma delivered a public lecture dealing with the mission of his life. Two months and a half after, Bhagwan published a declaration in his Urdu weekly paper *Dharm Jiwan* under the title of “Glad News” :—

“In that declaration,” says Bhagwan, “I carried the happy news to all creed-bound people of my country, that *it mattered little* whether they were literate or illiterate, polytheists or monotheists, believers in personal or impersonal God ; they were in spite of their lip

profession, *not* at all *true believers* in God, so long as they remained slaves to their low desires and low passions and progressed only on the lines of low attachments and sin. They remained all the same rank world-worshippers. And so long as they did not develop the true consciousness of sin and true freedom therefrom and true attraction for higher forces of unselfish service, neither they would get freedom from the life of undue attachments and sin and their consequent miseries, nor this motherland of ours could get any true and abiding good."

Further on says Bhagwan :—

I knew it but too well that all worship, reading of scriptures, all ceremonial observances, etc., in the name of religion and all, outward profession of being a Hindu, Musalman, Christian or Buddhist, etc., were of no use and utterly futile, so long as man did not awaken to the horror of the life of sin and undue attachment and get freedom therefrom, and did not develop attraction for evolving higher life in himself. To direct the attention of men of all denominations to this paramount need of what I termed to be 'new life,' I composed several hymns. One of these was the following :—

अभी बचो तुम अभी बचो तुम,

अभी यहीं बच जाओ जी;

गुनाह—आच्छा छोड़ ज़िन्दगी,

नई ज़िन्दगी पाओ जी । १

नई ज़िन्दगी के पाए बिन, गुनाह से नहीं रिहाई जी;

ज़ाहर में तुम रहो मुसलमां, हिन्दू या ईसाई जी । २

इत्यादि ।

English Translation :—

Be saved now, Be saved now,

Be saved here on this earth ;

Give up sin-soiled life,

Develop new life.

Without growing new life,

There is no freedom from sin ;

Though outwardly you may profess,

Islam, Hinduism or Christianity etc.

(*Vide* Chapter IX of *Autobiography*, Volume I.)

During those days, Bhagwan Dev Atma was connected with the Brahmo Samaj. But Brahmos, as a rule, were unconscious of the glory of the uniqueness of Bhagwan's life-vow. Some Brahmos actually turned bitterly hostile to him. They obstructed the due

accomplishment of Bhagwan's mission. Hence as a last resort, Bhagwan started Dev Samaj in 1887 as a vehicle for the carrying out of his unique light and power and hoisted the flag of Dev Dharm mission. This mission had nothing in common with Christ's mission of calling people to get salvation through his mediation, or Mohammad's mission of a warner. Bhagwan's mission was evolution of new and higher life—life free from the bondage of low-loves and low-hates and equipped with higher loves. He longed and laboured to see man transformed in his daily behaviour. He worked for growing a new type of humanity which should consist of truly higher and blessed altruistic souls who should live and not merely talk of higher life and find satisfaction only in professing faith in some so-called religion. It was this hunger for that practical higher life that gradually awakened Bhagwan to the futility of profession of God-belief or so-called direct communion with the so-called God, or the so-called worship of one God without a second. It was this thirst that gradually awakened him to the reality of his unique powers and the reality of the true transformation which took place in the lives of those who came under his influences. He saw those changes almost absent in all theistic denominations. Hence God began to be pushed in the background till the study of Nature and its immutable laws and the working therein of the evolutionary process created, for the first time in 1894, great doubts in his mind about the very existence of such a being.

FULL TRUST AND DEPENDENCE ON GOD.

Four years after the foundation of the Dev Samaj, an English monthly journal, *The Conqueror* was started by Bhagwan. It continued for three years. We consider those three years to be the most important years, as they marked the various phases through which Bhagwan had in his progressive light to pass. *The Conqueror* begins with the following prayer to God which shows full faith in and full trust on God. We quote the whole prayer as a piece of historical interest :—

“Paramdeva ! Thou art Infinite in Wisdom, Infinite in Power and Infinite in Holiness and Goodness. It is Thou who hast saved our souls and made us partakers of the blessings of holy and godly life by Thy Divine Dispensation, and it is Thou that hast called and chosen us, as Thy humble but faithful servants to preach the highest and harmonious ideal for man and glorious and soul-saving spiritual and moral truths to our countrymen and to our fellow-beings all over the earth. It is Thou that hast called us to convert the hearts of those who are merged in worldliness and sin, and create in them the holy desires that lead to godliness, and to do Thy will, and to live for Thy glory, and for the good and glory of humanity.

“Gracious God ! While we praise and thank Thee with all our hearts for the dispensation of those eternal and holy blessings, we also beseech Thee to take us fully in Thy care and protection, and enable us to do our duty as Thy faithful servants. Lord ! we are

very poor, poor in numbers, poor in powers and above all poor in the means that are required to carry on Thy work. When we see, on the one hand, how tremendous is the power of those who love worldliness and sin, and who though sometimes talk of Thee, yet hate Thee and Thy true servants from the heart of their hearts, and try to do their best to hinder Thy work and to persecute and crush Thy servants; and observe, on the other hand, extremely scanty help and little encouragement that is given us by our fellow beings; we are simply bewildered and at this critical time we simply look to Thee through the eyes of faith. Do Thou sustain us, as Thou hast hitherto done, and do Thou fill us with Thy power and lead us on by Thy own hand in the path that Thou wishest us to tread."

Again in the next article it was shown why the journal is named *The Conqueror*. We read :—

"Such is the name of this journal which we venture to start from this day. The name would seem to most persons as a singular one, and so it is. Conqueror means one that conquers and we certainly send forth this journal to conquer. To conquer what? The hearts of people for the God."

MERE BELIEF IN GOD IS OF NO AVAIL.

This was the attitude of Bhagwan in his mission. But the words "conquer for God" had altogether a different meaning, different import and different destination for Bhagwan from that attached by Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. While replying to the question, why should we conquer hearts for God, the paper says :—

"Because unless the heart of man is renewed and converted from its sinful into holy and divine nature, he can neither save his own soul from its various dreadful effects, nor his community, nor can he raise himself and others in the high scale of humanity, power and civilisation. When we look closely into the present degraded condition of our country in its various phases, we find how numerous and great are the social evil customs that suck the life and vitality of our countrymen, how corrupt, base and perverted is the moral nature which they show in their daily practice by their falsehood, dishonesty, wickedness, cheating, cunning, selfishness, vicious taste, filthy language, cowardice, mutual distrust and various other immoral, oppressive and unjust actions and how devoid they are of the spiritual life in all its phases such as divine faith, love of purity, hatred for sin, sacrifice for good of others and holy feelings that make for religiousness and elevate individuals as well as nations."

"When we see all this, we realise, on the one hand, the very deep iniquity and sinfulness of Indian (human) heart which has brought about this dreadful condition; and feel on the other hand that unless the heart of our people is radically changed, there is no true hope for the 'salvation of India.' Can the education imparted at our schools and colleges effect this change? No.....*Nor can mere lip profession of God or belief in any religious creed or in any revealed*

Book or Prophet or the study of old scriptures and Sanskrit language produce the desired result; for we know, how those who have attempted this course have not only miserably failed, but by the corrupt and base nature of their heart, have added to the already existing moral depravity of this country and increased the fearful evils of hypocrisy, dishonesty and practical infidelity. Samuel Smiles truly says, 'It is the heart that rules in life.' Unless, therefore, the heart is changed, it is idle to expect that the above methods can save our country."

This clears up most unequivocally the position of Bhagwan that he considered mere belief in God as definitely of no avail. He longed to see man wholly transformed from the life of moral depravity to the higher life of purity and unselfish service.

How was heart to be changed? said *The Conqueror* :—

"The question arises how this important work of changing the hearts is to be done? If this cannot be accomplished by mere intellectual education, or belief in this or that religious creed, how can it, then, be accomplished? We answer, by living spiritual, holy and moral *force*; for it is the *force* that produces a *change*. As material forces bring about material changes, mental forces, mental changes, so the *holy spiritual and moral forces produce spiritual and moral changes*."

"Whenever any country reaches its climax in sin, and worldliness, the great God in His providence manifests His Holy and Divine power and His chosen servant being inspired and filled with *Dev Shakti* infuses the same spirit and power in other souls and thus converts and leads them to a high ideal of life, moral elevation and holy character. This special manifestation of God's power is called a Dispensation. And such is the Divine Dispensation (*Dev Bidhan*) of the Dev Dharm mission....."

II

GOD-WORSHIP PUSHED BACK.

The year 1892 witnessed very remarkable changes in the doctrinal and constitutional history of Dev Samaj. The *Conqueror* for that year throws a flood of light on these points. We read in the November issue of the journal of that year, an article on "Head Religion, Work Religion and Heart Religion," in which it was declared that it was impossible for man to commune directly with God so long as his heart was not changed and "made anew by the light and the power of *Dev Guru*" and that change from wickedness to purity of life was not possible without reverential and loving union with *Dev Guru* "through whom the power of God (*Dev Shakti*) works in the sinner's heart and creates and develops those divine and noble feelings which the teacher possesses."

We quote that very interesting and informing article to show the attitude adopted by the Dev Samaj towards God-worship in those days :—

"There are millions who belong to the first kind of religion (*i.e. Head Religion*). They believe that God exists, that He is Good and Holy, and that He wants us to be holy and fulfil His 'commandments,' but they never even *care to see* whether or not they do *act up* to their professions and those 'commandments.' Yet disobedient and sinners as they are, they are happy and even proud of their. *Head Religion*, for which they would even swear, quarrel, discuss, abuse and persecute others.

THE SECOND CLASS OF PEOPLE.

"The second class of people is fewer in number but a better one, though not the best. These people do, what? Why, many observe works and ceremonies, many of which are useless and misdirected, others are good and useful. What all this for? For recompense of *merit*, either temporal or eternal, in this or in the next birth or world. They are very proud of their good works but (they) never think nor care (to think) whether all of them proceed from good holy hearts or vile, selfish, praise-seeking, pleasure-seeking, world-worshipping hearts. Who seeth the heart, think they? *Works*, meritorious and honourable works and a *number* of works is required; the greater the number, the greater the reward and better the seat and position in the society of men or in Heaven. In short whether the heart is in *love* with God and godly men or not, is not their concern.....Most of the Hindus, Mohamedans, and most of the 'theists' among present-day Christians are men who belong to the first or second class or in some cases to both of these."

THE DEV DHARM MISSION.

"But the Dev Dharm mission is producing third class of people —people who *also* possess, '*Heart Religion*' and heart being changed,

mind and will follow its direction. We say *also* Heart Religion which means that it is added to good head and good works without which it is but a blind impulse which not unoften ends in wreck and ruin."

WHAT DOES THIS HEART-RELIGION TEACH?

"What does this *Heart Religion* teach? It teaches *Firstly*, that until a man's heart is changed and made anew by the power and light of *Devatwa*, he does not and cannot see or commune directly with God, nor realise and love truly and fully even godly men..... *Secondly*, the Dev Dharm mission teaches that such evil nature cannot be purified unless the heart is *turned from its indifferent or antagonistic attitude into a passive and reverential and loving attitude towards the God-sent (Dev Bidhan) Teacher (Dev Guru or Dev Sewak) through whom the power of God (Dev Shakti) works* in the sinner's heart and creates and develops those divine and noble feelings which the teacher possesses. That it is idle and foolish to assert that a man can learn history or geography or literature, etc., from the All-knowing God without the mediation of a professor or a teacher through whom that particular mental power—the gift of God—is communicated to the pupil who does not know it. Surely *if direct 'prayer and communion' with the All-Merciful Father could teach men, there would be no need of schools and colleges.*"

"According to the same law of communication and example, loving contact with great human spiritual or moral teachers and characters can infuse the same human character in other men. *'An ounce of example is better than a pound* (or we may say a ton) *of precept'* is literally and really true in this respect. Oh! that people would realise it."

GOD CANNOT SET A DIRECT EXAMPLE.

"It needs but a little reflection to understand the truth propounded by the Dev Dharm mission that *human virtues such as patience, courage, perseverance, honesty, self-control, and self-sacrifice can be directly and fully acquired by contact with concrete human characters*. Almighty God has no struggles with sin; no evil desires to control and no persecutions and trials to patiently bear; no self or pleasure of His own to sacrifice and give up or deny for others; *then He cannot set a direct example of the human virtues* referred to above, which purpose He designs to fulfil through human teachers and saviours, manifested according to His Divine Dispensations as the needs and state of the people, age and land require."

This eliminated altogether from the philosophy of Dev Dharm the theory of the so-called God which the monotheists of Brahmo cult insist upon. The experience and growing inward light of Bhagwan showed him the utter hollowness of that absurd idea. And once he was convinced of anything, Bhagwan took the earliest opportunity of declaring it without any care of the consequences.

GOD-WORSHIP PUSHED STILL FARTHER.

Consciousness of the uniqueness of his own powers and the marvellous results which he achieved by his divine influences in the lives of those who formed reverential union with his unique soul, combined with the experience he acquired of the rotten and wicked lives of those millions of souls around him who posed to have direct communion with God or worship God, flashed upon his heart a still deeper fact that he was in fact the true saviour, and that through him alone could God be realised by man. We read, therefore, with interest in the December issue of *The Conqueror* for 1892 the following pregnant declaration :—

I AM THE SHIP OF HOPE AND LIFE FOR SOULS AND LEAVEN
FOR ELEVATING NATIONS.

1. The manifestation of *Devattwa* or *Dev Dharm* is not in any stone or tree or animal, but it is in my soul and likewise all its high and sublime characteristics are in my soul.

2. It is only the fools who, leaving me aside, attribute the special manifestation of *Devattwa*, its beauties and blessings to *any abstract idea or word*.

3. I have appeared with this especial manifestation of *Devattwa* with the object, that all those souls, who, having followed their self-will or (lower) inclinations and (being) steeped in spiritual darkness, have fallen a prey to the poisonous influences of worldliness and sin and thus cause their death should turn from their self-willed course (*man mukhi chal*), and by uniting in love and faith with me should save themselves from spiritual death and receive high and holy life of *Devattwa* and its 'beauties and blessings.

4. By uniting in love with me and by coming under my control (influences) and discipline every (fit) soul turns from its old hellish life and gets new, high and heavenly life.

5. After its union with me, the more my holy influence and control takes hold of any soul, the more is that new light generated in it, by which it becomes able to see and realise the principles and ins and outs of spiritual life.....

6. After its union with me, the more my holy influence and control takes hold of any soul, the more does the love of those beauties and blessings of *Devattwa* and of high principles grow in it, which it becomes able to see and realise.

7. After its union with me, the more any soul comes under my holy influence and control, the more is it established and moulded in life and beauties of *Devattwa* of which I am the model.

8. The more any soul, after its union with me, is subjected to my holy influence and control, the more higher hatred is created in it for all such evils and things as I abhor.

9. The more any soul, after its union with me, is subjected to holy influence and control, the more is the love for the four main principles of *Devattwa*, viz., the love of the eternal, love of Truth, love of Justice and love of Goodness, created and developed in it.

10. After its union with me, the more any soul is subjected to my holy influence and control, the more does it feel pain and repentance for all such thoughts and deeds as proceed from its old life of *pishachattwa* (wickedness).

11. *I am a ship of hope and life for such souls as are drowning in the sea of pishachattwa* (wickedness) and am leaven for saving, inspiring and elevating societies and nations, fallen into the destructive influences of *pishachattwa*.

12. Since the leaven of *Devattwa* that is in me, crushes and destroys *pishachattwa*, it is a sacred and heavenly means in the hands of God for regenerating and elevating souls enslaved in *pishachattwa*.

13. There is no such soul as, having forsaken its self-willed course (*man mukhi chal*) and united with me to any extent, has not become better and higher than what it was before.

14. As a branch that is connected with a poisonous tree, bears poisonous fruits and one joined with the vine-tree bears sweet grapes, so a soul that is united with the tree of its own or any one else's unholy heart, brings forth poisonous and soul-destroying fruits, whereas a soul that is united with me by receiving divine nourishment, produces heavenly and life-giving fruits of high and holy character.

15. As a branch of poisonous tree is known by its poisonous fruits, so is a soul connected with me like a branch, known by its life-giving qualities, manifested in me.

16. *I am that tree of the life of Devattwa which produces heavenly and life-giving fruits* and therefore a soul that is united with me like a branch, not only escapes destruction itself and does not destroy others, but also produces for itself and others the nectar and sweet fruits of life.

17. A cow that is hungry does not refrain from eating grass of any jungle, lest there be some dust somewhere on a blade of grass. Likewise any man that feels hungry, does not refrain from using bread of wheat, lest there be some grain of sand, etc., mixed with it. In the same way, any soul with a real desire for the heavenly life of *Devattwa* cannot refrain from uniting with me, simply because of some prejudice, or this or that crazy notion. For, he who eats and receives nourishment lives, whereas he that does not eat, must die.

18. *No one can get direct from God sunlight without sun, wheat bread without wheat, learn medical science without a medical man or a doctor, and the knowledge of human history without one*

knowing it, since the contrary is opposed to the very law and purpose of God. *In the same way, no one can obtain such of the beauties and blessings of Devattwa, as are manifested in me, direct from God even by foolishly supposing that he can do so.*

19. He alone, who accepts the gospel of my manifestation and, having turned from self-willed attitude, unites with me, like a branch connected with a tree, in order to give me control over his soul and to lose its old sinful individuality and to receive the holy nourishment, is mine and of my mission and can be benefited by the object of my Dispensation.....

24. The more any soul is deeply united with me and is under my control, the more it is necessary for it to love and revere all such souls as are united with me, to that extent, to which they are under my control, and feel them as his own and himself as theirs. But he who acts against this principle cannot be mine.

25. For everyone, who has surrendered himself for my mission and has taken the vow of preaching my gospel and turning (converting) souls and uniting them with me, it is particularly necessary to obtain entire sanctification from his old sinful nature and prove, *by his conduct and dealings*, that he reveres me next to God, above every one else, and that next to me, he sincerely loves all other disciples and bears no malice or ill-feelings to them and does not feel unhappy but gratified at seeing one or other of them grow better and higher than himself, and that in the interest of his personal respect, name, position, ease or anything else, he, in no way, creates disorder in the general management and glory of the mission."

This can show us how God was being pushed farther and farther back as Bhagwan advanced in his knowledge of his own unique soul and experience of human nature.

As soon as Bhagwan Dev Atma declared himself a true saviour, there was a great stir caused in the camp of theists. They took the earliest opportunity of protesting against this true declaration. We read in the columns of *The Conqueror* for January 1893, a notice taken of this objection by a Dev Guru apostle. He writes :—

"I often meet with foolish questions from those who boast of 'nineteenth century' and 'enlightenment' but who so sadly lack commonsense.

"For instance, a man asks, 'Why do you call your Founder your saviour? Is it not God's power that works in him that saves? What right has he then to call himself a saviour?' In answer to this I say, 'why do you call so and so a doctor or a *Shastri*? Whose knowledge is it that he possesses? Is not power of knowledge God's?' 'Yes,' you reply, 'but then by a doctor or a *Shastri* we don't mean to say that he is the fountain of knowledge or he originates or creates knowledge but that he is simply a *possessor* of it.' In the same way, no Dev Dharmi ever means nor does our Founder ever say that he is God, nor does he ever deny that he has not received God's special power. What he means is this that he

possesses the soul-saving power just as a *possessor* of the power of curing men physically is called a doctor, so one in possession of soul-saving power is called a saviour. Do you not speak of a certain swimmer who saved you from drowning, as one who saved your life and is he not your physical saviour? I have read scores of testimonies saying that 'Mother Seagle's Syrup saved my life.' Do we not say that air saves my life; water saves my life. Well, as God has created these physical environments to *save* our physical life, so has He created spiritual environments for our souls, *viz.*, high Characters (like our Dev Guru) by assimilating whose high mind, noble feelings and nature, we can also be saved from our sinful course and sinful tendencies and grow in *Devattwa*."

While before this great declaration made by Bhagwan Dev Atma that he was the saviour, those saved by him used to say 'God's power saved me,' 'God took pity on me,' so on and so forth, we find change in the attitude of the saved souls after the declaration. Hence in the February 1893 issue of *The Conqueror* we read a story of conversion of a soul who writes "What has the Dev Guru done for me?" He writes therein:—

"Towards the close of December 1889 two of the *sewaks* of the Dev Guru came to Quetta on their missionary tour. Here was the turning-point in my life. I came in contact with these *sewaks* and felt attraction and reverence towards them. I attended their prayer and other meetings regularly. The divine power influenced my soul and turned me from the dreadful course of life, and by and by I was enabled to get rid of the sinful habits. When turned from my old life and finding myself happy, I would often consciously or unconsciously say, 'Ah, what high and heavenly blessings the Dev mission has brought for man.' The change also did me a great good intellectually and as regards my physical and social life. At first I was lazy but now being filled with enthusiasm, I took to study and improvement and shortly rose from the post of Rs. 19 to 55 per mensem under Government. I began to speak to others about this blessed gospel of the Dev Guru. Many times I distributed meals to the poor and served the sick in the hospital, especially during the night. To relieve a lady who had lost her husband in hospital, of her pecuniary embarrassment, I collected, by begging from door to door, a handsome sum of rupees to meet her expenses and conveyance to her native place. What I mean to shew is that *it was the holy influence and life of the Dev Guru that imparted this enthusiasm and self-sacrifice*, and I give all the praise to God and His holy manifestation in the person of the Dev Guru, otherwise I know, I lived a life of spiritual darkness and sin like thousand others around me."

He concludes the story by a prayer as under:—

"May God enable me to be faithful to the Dev Guru and convey his (Dev Guru's) blessed gospel to many dying souls."

Though God-belief was there, yet it was the life of Bhagwan Dev Atma which was being rightly felt as the one blessed thing to be assimilated.

In the March issue of *The Conqueror* for the 1893, we see this tendency still more predominant and emphatic. "The miracles of Dev Guru go on" is the heading of a change wrought in the life of a soul by the power of Bhagwan Dev Atma. It runs as under :—

"The spiritual power of the Dev Guru, during our last *Devotsab*, while, on the one hand, vivified the apostles and preachers, on the other touched specially those souls as had come from the moffusil to join in and witness our anniversary. Among these a remarkable conversion was effected in a well-educated gentleman. No sooner did he go back to his native village, after breathing in the holy atmosphere of Dev Ashram, and imbibing the spirit of Dev Guru for good many days, he began to cut as under the hellish bonds of *caste* to which he was enchained in social slavery. These acts of his and his public meetings and testimonies to the glory and power of *Dev Guru* and the remarkable inner change and conversion he had wrought in his heart which enabled him to realise and love and get the blessings of God, took the people by awe and surprise. *They felt that he was really transformed into a new being and spoke under a new power he had brought from Dev Guru.*"

"This only confirms the truth of our beloved Founder *Dev Guru's* words that the world can only abuse me and decry the divine fire in me, but cannot extinguish it for all that, nor can it stop the change that this force is producing and will produce in future....."

The same tendency is maintained and emphasised still more in the subsequent stories of conversions.

GOD'S JURISDICTION STILL MORE CURTAILED—HE COULD NEITHER PUNISH A SINNER NOR FORGIVE HIM.

In the April issue of *The Conqueror* for 1893, we read the following criticism under the heading "the Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sins" by God, believed in by Semetic faiths and some of the Indian creeds, which shows quite clearly that the conception of God which Bhagwan Dev Atma had at this time, was not of an anthropomorphic Deity, and he did not believe that God could get offended, feel a spirit of retaliation and feel mercy for those who appealed to Him :—

"We wish to point out that the idea of forgiveness of sins is an old relic of superstition, prevalent to a very large extent, equally in the polytheistic and monotheistic communities. It is not the teachers of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism only that have taught and their followers who have believed in this wrong dogma, but many teachers of religion in our own country such as Nanak, Kabir,

etc., had a belief in the forgiveness of sins and their followers have still faith in it. It seems, the idea about the forgiveness of sins arose from a false analogy. A man is offended or injured by his fellow being. He is roused at once by a feeling of retaliation and wants to injure him in order to satisfy his feeling of revenge, but somehow the offender changes his front and appeals to the mercy of the offended party not to retaliate or injure him and the latter grants the request and pardons him for his misconduct. This is what they call forgiveness of offence or sins in relation of one man to another and they conclude from this fact that when God is also offended by any one, He also feels to retaliate and injure the offender, but by imploring for His mercy or by the intervening influence of some one, He is pacified and forgives the sinner and allows him to escape scot-free. Such is, however, not the case, because :—

“ *Firstly*—The true God as preached by our *Dev Guru* is not an anthropomorphic Deity and He has in Him no such feelings as those of retaliation or revenge, which surely arise from animal nature or even of mercy which is human and given to man for his good, and proves no doubt, if properly exercised, useful to him.

“ *Secondly*—Sin is a result of the powers of man that are abused by him in favour of injustice or iniquity and hence its action in the very thought of man, whether he externally commits it or not, makes his inner nature of the soul corrupt and gives rise in it to moral and spiritual disease ; and *as man's physical disease such as fever, pneumonia, etc., cannot be forgiven, so the spiritual and moral diseases of any man cannot be forgiven.*

“ The *Dev Guru* teaches :—‘It is wrong to suppose that like the courts of law of this world, a sinner is, after death punished by a tribunal of God, in some other world on a *particular* day and cast into a place called hell or sent again into this world to take a form of any man, animal, tree or a mineral object. Nor is it right to suppose that sin is a thing which can be forgiven. By committing sin either in thought, word or deed a soul *receives its award there and then* in the formation of its corrupt and iniquitous nature.

“ *The true God neither forgives sin of any man, nor punishes him according to man-made codes of different people such as (a) eternal or periodical punishment in a hell burning with fire, etc., and (b) transmigration of souls, adopting the bodies of lower creation viz., pigs, donkeys, snakes, fish, trees, etc.*

“ *The true punishment lies in the disease itself, yea, the disease itself is the punishment.* Soul suffers here as well as hereafter on account of its fatal course of *Pishachat*, viz., love of all that is temporal, untrue, unjust and selfish. As the violation of physical laws brings on disease and thereby its punishment in the body itself, so any violation of the laws of soul's being is attended with spiritual

and moral disease and its dreadful afflictions in the soul itself ; no supposed eternal hell fire or a system of transmigration to low-creation being necessary or provided by God, who rules not according to different whims and fancies of different people but by His immutable and universal laws of spiritual and moral world which have always been in the past and shall ever in future remain one and the same for every soul living in this or any other world."

Thus Bhagwan emphasised the reign of laws which were unchangeable and universal and which ruled the life of human soul. This left little for God to interfere in our every day life. All that man was asked to attain was the knowledge of laws. It was indeed a very slight thread which bound the laws to the so-called God. A God who could neither change laws nor reward a soul, nor punish him, nor forgive him becomes reduced to a shadow and a name.

III

NEW LIGHT ON COSMIC RELATIONS.

As Bhagwan Dev Atma's knowledge of his own unique self and knowledge of Nature grew, he realised the truth and glory of the evolutionary process going on in Nature and he discovered that life and death of man rested on cosmic conditions. This naturally reduced worship of God to a shadow and brought into prominence the great *law of relation* which he discovered to be the one great fact of life. In the columns of the September issue of *The Conqueror* for 1893, we read the following under the title of "Dev Guru and the twelve brats in the year" :—

"Such as are able to peep into the phenomena of the various kingdoms of creation on this earth and the stages through which they have passed, can easily comprehend the Law of Evolution that is at work. How our earth has, gradually from its nebulous state, transformed into its present solid state, fit for the life of vegetable, animal and man. How the last named three have come into existence one after another: Man, the last creature on the stage, has again incessantly undergone operation of the same Law of Evolution and his present civilisation, the science, the art, the literature and above all his social and moral status as contrasted with the primitive man, irresistibly point to the wonderful progress he has made. But it is a *fact* nevertheless that, considered as a part of and a connected link in one great machine of the Universe, man is completely *disunited* not only with his fellow beings, but the Creator and creation. He is yet as far from the harmonious and progressive kingdom of *Ekta* (All Union) as ever. Yea, wanting as he does, the very nature of *Ekta* or *Devat* which is the only *root* of harmonious! uniting Man to man, to animals, etc., etc., it is impossible for him either to realise or to exhibit in his life the blessings and elevated character of *Ekta*. Wars, murders, robberies, thefts, selfishness, unreality, superstitions prevailing in humanity in one form or another is a proof of the truth of our assertion. *In fact, man in his relation to others, has proved himself worse than beasts.* His enlightenment, art and science and one thousand and one things of a civilised life, with which he is surrounded, have failed, as they must fail, to give him a power to free himself from *un-ekta* or disunion arising from the life of *pishachat*, and to unite with various kingdoms and his Creator on the basis of *Devat*. Hence arises the necessity of a divinely manifested soul who should possess the nature or power to bring about the union of units of this disordered and deranged machinery. God be glorified, that this need of the times is fulfilled, under the Law of Evolution, in the person of the Dev Guru, whose mission is nothing if not the destruction of disunion and the establishment of *Ekta* on this earth.

"It is this great principle and the object of *ekta* that underlie all our relations to the Dev Guru, the Infinite one and other existences. It is to obtain deliverance from *un-ekta* or *pishachat* and grow in the life of *ekta* that the struggles and spiritual *sadhans* of the Dev Guru's Disciple are carried on. It is with this object in view that we have *brats* or festivals, once every month, in order to examine ourselves as to how we stand in our relation with each of the various existences and to develop, strengthen and sweeten that relation."

This great need of establishing higher harmonious relations with the various kingdoms of cosmos is most authoritatively laid down in the "Cardinal principles of Dev Dharm" which more than anything else prove how cosmos was becoming more and more a fact, a living and abiding fact with Bhagwan and how it became a means for the realisation by him of the highest object of man's life as consisting in his being able more and more to establish harmonious relation with various existences and kingdoms of Nature. The September issue of *The Conqueror* for 1893 contains the following "Cardinal principles of Dev Dharm :—

I. "That man is conscious of his existence and that of other existences besides himself.

II. That man has no existence independent of other existences and that he is only a part of the stupendous whole or universe.

III. That man being a part or connected link in the Infinite Cosmos cannot escape partaking either consciously or unconsciously good or evil, useful or injurious influences thereof.

IV. That the first and foremost duty of man is to adjust all parts of his own organism in relation to one another and his whole being in relation to every other existence related to him.

V. That the true way of man's adjustment or union or *ekta* of different parts of his own being, and (that) of his being with other existences related to him lies in his attainment of the knowledge of the principles that can effect the adjustment and the necessary love or power for their application.

VI. That there is such a thing as *sattyta* or *asattyta* (reality or unreality) in man and in his relation to others.

VII. That there is such a thing as *nittyta* or *anittyta* (constancy or inconstancy) in man and in his relation to others.

VIII. That there is such a thing as *Samta* or *Asamta* (harmony or disharmony) in man's own being and in his relation to others.

IX. That there is such a thing as *hit-ta* or *ahit-ta* (evolution or degeneration) in regard to man's own being as well as in his relation to others.

X. That the principles of

(1) *Sattyta* (reality in his relations),

(2) *Nittyta* (constancy in his relations),

(3) *Samta* (harmony in his relations), and

(4) *Hit-ta* (evolution in his relations),

in so far as they are truly discerned, loved and applied in all thoughts, feelings and deeds do unmistakably lead a man to the life and blessings of *ekta* or *Devat*.

XI. That the non-acceptance and hatred of the principles of *ekta* in thoughts, feelings and deeds or love of

(1) *Asattyta* (unreality in his relations),

(2) *Anittyta* (inconstancy in his relations),

(3) *Asamta* (disharmony in his relations), and

(4) *Ahit-ta* (degeneration in his relations),

leads a man to the life and woeful consequences of *un-ekta* or *pishachat*.

XII. That the *life or nature of Ekta is created, maintained and evolved in souls by their being born in and conforming to its prototype and its antitype*, since no union (*ekta*) of units is, in the very nature of things, possible without any one (*ek*) unifying type.

XIII. That the Unfolder of universe has, in due time, *manifested, in the person of Dev Guru, the prototype of ekta* for the deliverance of humanity from *pishachat* and its evolution in *Devat* or the life of *ekta*.

XIV. That *no man can be saved from the life of un-ekta or pishachat* without being born in or conforming to the type of *ekta*, since the life of *Ekta* or *Devat* neither springs forth in man as a *spontaneous growth*, nor can it exist by following self-will (*man-mukhi-chal*).

XV. That the full surrender of *manmukhi-chal* (self-will), the root of *un-ekta*, through

(a) *Faith or trust in*

(b) *Love or assimilation of*

(c) *Obedience to*

the PROTOTYPE and its ANTITYPE is the fundamental means of securing *EKTA* or *PARAM EKTA*.

XVI. That the progressive life of *ekta* or *Devat* is the root of all that is eternal, true, just, noble, good, sublime and beautiful and source of all heavenly joy and blessings.

XVII. That the life of *un-ekta* or *pishachat* is the root of all that is false, unjust, ignoble, evil or sinful, gross and ugly and source of all hellish discord, pain, misery and curse.

XVIII. That to attain progressive *ekta* with all and thus establish the kingdom of *param ekta* (all-union) is the true, complete and highest object and glorious ideal of human life, ever presented to the world.

XIX. That those who attain the divine life of *ekta* themselves and fight against the powers of *pishachat* to save their fellow beings from the destructive powers thereof and spread the blessings of the life of *ekta* or *Devat* and spend their powers and other things in this the highest and noblest cause of humanity, are the *most* blessed and noblest of their race.

XX. That (a) to *create, maintain and develop* the life of *ekta* or *devat*, (b) to destroy the life of *un-ekta* or *pishachat*, (c) to teach the Laws and Principles related thereto, (d) to spread the blessings of *param ekta* and thereby promote the highest and noblest cause of humanity is the *chief object* of the manifestation of Dev Guru (PROTOTYPE of *ekta*) and his Dev Dharm Mission."

These principles as we can see are self-sufficient without any reference to God. The first three principles show man's most intimate relation for life and death with the universe. The fourth principle shows that the highest duty of man consists not in wasting his breath after imaginary God but in adjusting his higher relationship to the kingdoms of the universe. This adjustment again is made possible by the *knowledge* of these principles and *power* to follow them. This life of *ekta* again is not created, maintained or developed by the worship of God but by union with Dev Guru, the prototype. The highest, noblest and the most blessed object of man's existence, according to principle 18, is to attain progressive *ekta*.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's love for truth and goodness could not let him rest satisfied with teaching people prayers or worship of God which brought no change (as he saw clearly) in the evil and wicked ways even of those who claim direct communion with God, nor did the Almighty God, otherwise too, bring any change for the better in the lives of his worshippers. He found these prayers and worship in actual life to be mockeries. *He wanted to make people really noble and serviceable.* He wanted to change the course of man from the life of wickedness and evil ways to be innocent, useful and serviceable units. He saw that the real cause of wickedness was man's love for low pleasures. This low love force could be effaced only by actual higher power. He witnessed that *his was the only power* which brought about the miraculous change.

God-idea remained because Bhagwan had not as yet arrived at the truth that the universe was uncreated and that his own manifestation was due to the cosmic process of evolution as working in the human world. God was being gradually reduced to mere form and name.

Again, in the October 1893, issue of *The Conqueror* we read a declaration on "Dev Guru's especial manifestation and his position, mission and work," which contains the following paragraph which is very informing and historically very important :—

"5. *Previous to the manifestation of Devat in Dev Guru*, no doubt, the various spheres of creation, viz., the material, the vegetable

the animal and man's kingdoms, as also the supermundane worlds and above all the Infinite Creator Himself did exist but none of the humanity possessed that high life and capacity which is necessary for duly realising and recognising and practically establishing those heavenly and most noble, blessed and beneficent relations which should bind one with another. Thus the world was destitute of the proper recognition of *ekta*, its invaluable light and life and the treasures of numerous heavenly blessings arising therefrom but *with the advent of Dev Guru the treasures of heavenly light and life have been unlocked unto mankind.*"

Thus though the infinite God was believed to exist, neither He nor His manifestation gave that light and that life which Bhagwan Dev Atma blessed the world with.

As the light of the love of reality and truth grew more and more in Bhagwan Dev Atma, he saw the facts as they are. Hence the following note which we read in January 1894 issue of *The Conqueror* shows clearly what views Bhagwan Dev Atma held about the oft-repeated fact of the theistic denominations that God watches over their destinies and like an affectionate father guides and rescues them. Facts told Bhagwan that such an affectionate watching and guiding of the so-called loving Father was a mere illusion and he declared that truth to the world:—

WHERE IS THE DIRECT HAND OF GOD?

"There is a class of sentimental theists whose parrot-cry is that God is our most affectionate father and mother and constantly watches the faltering steps of every man or woman and He himself steps in to guide and rescue him or her through His direct command in to the heart. That this theory of direct interference and communion and help of the Deity is falsified every day in our lives is quite evident to those who have any sense of reality in them.

"However the following may help to open the eyes of the unwary:—

A CHILD BOILED TO DEATH IN A POT.

'A child met a terrible death at Carrick-on-Suir last Saturday (14th ultimo). Mrs. Power, a farmer's wife, was boiling a huge pot of water on the kitchen fire. She left the room for a few minutes, leaving there her four years' old daughter. The little one had climbed on a stool, over-balanced itself and fallen into the pot. On returning she sat down to blow the fire, and was horrified to see a little hand clasping the edge of the pot. On looking in, she saw the little girl literally boiled to death. She drew out the body, the child being quite dead'.

"The question is," commented *The Conqueror*, "Why did not God save the child in the mother's absence? Why, because He never does *directly* save anybody. He works through the law of evolution and evolves humanity through mediums created for the purpose in the physical world, as surely he does in spiritual world.

Those, therefore, who neglect these spiritual saviours of humanity neglect the very law of God."

It required a little more knowledge of Nature to impress upon Bhagwan the fact that the law of evolution needed no creator or mechanic, and that it worked by Nature's own inherent processes.

There are millions of facts which eloquently and emphatically proclaim that God is a fiction, but as the entire animal world in absence of progressive intellect remained and even remains to-day absolutely blind to the knowledge of all those physical laws and facts which have enabled man to develop the whole world of civilisation, in the same way, in absence of the love of facts millions remain blind to facts and thus pin their faith on fiction and leave Nature alone, which in fact is real, and without which they will not be able to live even for a few moments.

TWELVE GREAT INJUNCTIONS OF DEV DHARM MISSION DO NOT INCLUDE BELIEF IN GOD.

In the April 1894, issue of *The Conqueror* we read the following twelve great injunctions of the Dev Dharm Mission which, strange to say, leave worship of God severely alone. All have reference to man's life or behaviour and no emphasis is laid on belief in God :—

(1) Form thy *character*. (2) Be *just* in all thy dealings. (3) Love and raise thy *country* by high *character*. (4) Falter not in the path of *duty*. (5) Prove that holy character is *above* everything. (6) Grow in *holy powers*. (7) Keep thy *holy promises*. (8) Be true to thy *high ideals*. (9) Be loyal to *discipline*. (10) Honour thy *government*. (11) Tolerate not *evil or Sin*. (12) Glorify *Devat* in thy *life*.

SHOWERS OF DIVINE GRACE AND SHOWERS OF HUMAN ILL-FEELINGS AMONG THEISTS GO HAND IN HAND.

This was the heading of a note in the March 1894 issue of the *Conqueror* which shows the very scant regard that Bhagwan gradually came to possess for the word "theism." The note read as under :—

"This remarkable phenomenon is worthy to be noted by all those who want to know about the sentimental nature of the theistic system, based upon the so-called 'Direct voice of God' or in other words individual self-will. From a letter, published in the *Indian Messenger*, dated 11th February, over the signature of Mr. A. M. Bose, President of S. B. Samaj, Calcutta, we gather that these annual meetings far from being seasons of 'fraternal greeting' are rather seasons of 'disputation or contention.' But in the same Paper we read elsewhere that 'showers of Divine Grace' were poured in the divine services over the devoted heads of those who joined the said annual meetings during the very days the same were held. The reader will now be able to understand the meaning of our heading. It may appear a strange anomaly but it is a fact

nevertheless. Why is it so? The reason is plain. Because in the first place *prayers to and the so-called Communion with God however sincere, are not sufficient in reconciling man to man and man to other creations* and harmonising his relation with men and other created existences, in the second place, the different human relations and societies can be adjusted and united, then and only then when a central human type of *Ekta*, for whom there is no room in the abstract and sentimental theistic system, also holds various units in unison with him and with one another by regenerating and moulding their character in *Devat*."

This mockery of theistic prayers, theistic communion, theistic direct voice of God, etc., was growing more and more clear to Bhagwan Dev Atma. He was getting more and more conscious that theism failed totally as a force in moulding higher human character. To him religion had no meaning if it did not bring about evolution of higher life in the believers. This actual practical transformation in the every day life of man was the only test of any system being called a religious system. The lives of millions upon millions of theists eloquently illustrated the grim reality that as a power in building higher character theism was an utter failure. As the sun was the source of physical life, so Bhagwan felt that his own unique powers were the fountain source of marvellous higher changes in the lives of people. It was but inevitable that one step more and Bhagwan Dev Atma would begin to feel doubts whether such a being as God did at all exist.

IV

AN ABSTRACT OF THE PAPER ON DEV DHARM READ AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIOUS AT CHICAGO.

We read in the columns of *The Conqueror* an abstract of the paper on Dev Dharm published in the "History of the world's Parliament of Religions" which keeps no place for God in the entire technique of the Dev Dharm mission. This abstract was approved of as correct representation of the Dev Dharm Mission by *The Conqueror* except that we have to read "life of Devat" in place of "spiritual life." In the March 1894, issue it is published as under :—

1. "*Sketch of the Mission—Mahamania Pujnibar Pandit Sattyanand Agnihotri*, founder of the Dev Dharm, was born a high caste Brahman in 1850. From boyhood he was rich in spirituality and his early manhood was devoted to religious studies and philanthropic work. In 1882, an intense internal experience culminated in his announcement that he was an apostle to save from sin. Disciples flocked around him and he devoted himself to evangelisation and pastoral care. His denunciations of worldliness and sin awakened persecution. For a time he still continued to work with the Brahmo Samaj, but this body did not receive his teachings, and in 1887, he founded the Dev Dharm. After shaping the principles of *Devatship*, he promulgated the four *mahatats* in 1892. He has written eighty books or tracts and founded two journals. In 1893, came new light and power and the reorganisation of the Mission on that higher basis.

"2. *Cardinal Principles*—Man is conscious of his existence and other existences. He has no existence independent of them, and is but a part of the universe. Therefore, he cannot escape its influences. His first duty is to adjust each part of his organism to every other part and his whole being to every existence. The means consist in knowing what principles can effect the adjustment and what power can apply them. In man and in his relation to others are Permanency and Transiency. In his knowledge of self and others are Truth and Untruth. In his being and in his relationships are Harmony and Disharmony. In his higher interests are Selfdenial and Selfishness. The discernment of Permanence, Truth, Harmony and Selfdenial, with love of them and hatred and denunciation of all opposed to them constitutes complete spiritual life. Absence of spiritual life and love of Transiency, Untruth, Disharmony and Selfishness constitute the natural life.

"Only through spiritual life can man attain adjustment. Spiritual life is the root of perfection, natural life the source of evil. Master souls save man, create spiritual life, and fulfil the law of redemption. Spiritual life is no spontaneous outgrowth from natural life ; without master saviours man feels no desire and has no power

to save himself. By cultivating spiritual life, man can effect progressive union with all.

“To attain this union and to establish the kingdom of union is the object of life. The most blessed and noblest man is he who attains spiritual life, strives to spread its blessings and struggles to save his fellows. This is the mission of our teacher (Dev Guruji).

“3. *The Four Fundamental Principles*—[A] Love the eternal interests of the spiritual life, but hate whatever binds the soul to the temporal. [B] Love the search for and attainment of truth but hate untruth. [C] Love harmony and regard rights, but hate but renounce discord. [D] Love to do good and to sacrifice self; hate selfish desires and relationships. Then follow two score minor principles representing the type of spiritual life developed in every soul uniting with Agnihotri (*i.e.*, Dev Guruji—Ed.) in faith, love and obedience.

4. *Characteristics of the Religion of the Spiritual Life*—A religion dispensing with law is unscientific and unauthoritative. The Dev Dharm is based on the laws of biology and is therefore scientific, logical and philosophical. It gives new birth, and makes holy life and character, and is thus a practical religion. It raises man to divinity, brings the divine kingdom of spiritual life, and establishes universal union; it is therefore of divine origin.”

From this it is evident that highest adjustment in various cosmic relations is taught as the supreme ideal of life and Bhagwan Dev Atma is believed to be the one true Saviour and Evolver.

V GREAT MENTAL CONFLICT.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's study of the scientific literature went on with greater zeal than before. This combined with the experience of the most degrading practices even of many of the leaders of various theistic denominations who boldly and unscrupulously trafficked in untruth and callous injustice, created in Bhagwan, a doubt as regards the very existence of God. The story of the great mental conflict into which this doubt plunged Bhagwan, was very graphically and impressively described by himself in the columns of the *Jivan Path* for Baisakh 1962 (April 1905). We give below a free translation from that :—

“ I entertained belief in the existence of God for eleven years after I took up my life-vow. It was in the early months of the twelfth year that I reached a stage of evolution when several doubts began to rise in my mind about the very fact of the existence of such a being. During this period, I was passing through persecutions engineered against me by legal prosecutions. The time was indeed very trying for me. I was, on the one hand, suffering intensely at the hands of my prosecutors and persecutors and, on the other, I was beset with doubts about the existence of that very Being, in whose hands I used to feel myself safe at the hour of darkest persecutions and thus console my heart. This was the time when I had already studied and deeply thought over for years the law of evolution in the universe. Hence the more I applied the searchlight of scientific tests to my God-belief, the more my doubts grew and strengthened about it.

“ This growing and deepening doubt plunged me into a great mental struggle. On the one hand, my evolved mental powers guided by my love of truth urged me to reach the right conclusions through the scientific methods of investigation about this God-belief also ; and on the other, my deeply cherished and nurtured but blind faith in God—which had become almost organic by the hereditary tendencies and my own extraordinary devotional exercises—was not prepared to put up with the assault directed against it by my mental powers. Thus a conflict arose between my truth-loving mind and my blind faith which assumed enormous proportions as time went on. My heart, ruled by deep faith in and devotion for God, groaned and wept at this and whispered, ‘ Can the very existence of that supreme relation of mine be only a fiction whom I have all along felt to be everything for me ; whom I have ever realised to be the fountain source of all light, power and felicity of mind for me, and hence the very soul of my soul and the life of my being ; in order to fulfil whose every wish and to establish highest harmony with whom, I have not hesitated at making every kind of sacrifice—be that the sacrifice of any bodily happiness or comfort, fear or frown

of the world or loss of any other dear thing ; whom I have never left, though the world has left me ; at whose feet I have laid down *all* that I possessed without caring in the least for the untold sufferings which I had consequently to undergo, for the piercing shafts of calumny that were levelled against me, for the relatives, name and fame I had to renounce and the severest heart shocks of various kinds which I had to bear at the hands of my opponents ; in the ecstasy of whose devotion and love I have shed tears on hundreds of occasions, sang and danced in joy and kept night vigils on any number of occasions ; whose daily worship continuously for many an hour, I have felt as a sacred duty ; and whom I have always felt and maintained as the sovereign of my heart and have let no relation or happiness etc., to stand in the way ? Can He be a myth who is believed by millions as one great reality ? Can I be prepared to give up for nothing Him whom I have felt as the prop of my life, my greatest treasure and one highest possession ? Can I find solace anywhere after giving up this my highest refuge ? Never ! Never ! I cannot leave Him. I cannot renounce my prop of life. I feel death in the very attempt.'

"Against this cry of my cherished and nurtured blind faith, my developed mind urged on by love of truth boldly appealed, 'Oh heart ! be not sentimental. Thy faith is not based on truth. It is mistaken and false. Deep superstitious belief, however dear it may appear to you, has to be renounced anyhow if you wish to keep the path of your evolution continuously open. False belief is after all false, however lovely it may look and however deep it may have grown by years of practice. Such a false belief is an obstruction in the way of life's progress and so harmful, hence it is not worth while to stick to it. Oh thou heart ! Thou dost not belong to any ordinary soul who has room enough for belief true or false—but has no place or love for truth.....Thou art not an ordinary heart. Thou hast developed complete love of truth and reality, and being urged by them thou hast always sided with me. How is it possible for you to satisfy your love of truth by maintaining this false belief intact ? This is impossible. I am also a vital part of that very soul of which you are a major organ. And it is that soul which has been born with a unique speciality of establishing highest harmony in this world. How is it then possible for us two organs to live in disharmony or disunion with each other ? There is no other way open to us but to harmonise ourselves with each other for the sake of our own tranquillity and in order to fulfil the law of unity and to keep open the gates of continued progress of life. God-belief can never be true. Like all other gods and goddesses, God is also a huge fiction. You are a complete lover of truth. In thy path of progress, as thou hast before this renounced hundreds of false beliefs and superstitions and have all along most loyally sided with me even at the point of great perils ; so now too establish true and higher unity with me. To leave a long cherished belief will no doubt be very painful to you. But the door of goodness

for both of us cannot remain open for ever without undergoing such sufferings. Be not my guide keeping this blind faith intact, but as hithertofore be guided by me, who am the seer of truths and principles.

“ This appeal of love of truth combined with its cogent reasoning began gradually to change my heart. For a whole year, this false belief could not be completely rooted out. But my evolved mind moved by love of truth continued to apply its axe at its roots till at last this false belief was supplanted root and branch and fell with a crash, and thus truth triumphed completely over falsehood.”

Bhagwan Dev Atma knew what price he shall have to pay for this bold acceptance of the most unpleasant truth. He accordingly wrote further :—

“ I knew that even when I cherished belief in God, I had host of enemies in the theistic camp. Now when these my opponents come to know that I have given up this belief too, they will aim their machine-guns at me. But along with this, I also felt that false shots of false guns would do me no harm. Nay, they would not injure even a hair of my head. Nature is my one protector. Truth is my great unfailing weapon. It is but inevitable for me to triumph over all my falsehood-loving opponents. Can the following true saying of a Rishi ever prove wrong ‘ सत्य मेव जयते नानृतम्’ i.e., ‘ truth alone always triumphs’? Never! Never!!

“ On attaining this victory, I who was *Brahmbadi* before, now became *Vishavbadi*. During the days of my God-belief, I did believe Nature to be a reality but I believed it as a Creation of God ; and deemed God to be the most essential Being, my supreme relation and all in all. I did see Nature then but not as it really is. Under the influence of my bias for God-belief, I tried to see beauty and brightness in the most ugly and the most dark phenomena in Nature.....When I saw milk in the breasts of a mother, I concluded God to be a supreme mother. When I saw any useful animal or tree or even inorganic objects such as sun, moon, stars, water, air, earth, mountains and rivers, etc., I discerned in them the beneficent hand of good God and a book of His knowledge. When I saw beauty in natural scenery, I read beauty of God in that and felt delighted. In short, I read beauty and goodness of God in all beautiful, useful and sweet things of Nature and thus made my relation deeper and stronger with Him. But if in opposition to this, I witnessed the dark, horrible and destructive side of Nature, I tried to explain it to myself that even in that apparently destructive and ugly phenomena, there was the beneficence of good and beautiful God. As a human father when offended puts on a threatening look against a child, so Father of the Universe was by means of those threatening and ugly phenomena showing his offended mood. At the time of dark gales of wind, the heavy falls of rain or the crash

of lightning, I consoled my heart by remembering God as 'भीष्मभीष्मनाम'. When I read the news of the sinking of any ship along with hundreds of young men and women, suckling babies (the milk in whose mother's breasts had not yet dried) and even pregnant women (in whose wombs God had not yet completed his work), or when I heard about the rivers having overflowed and washed away villages after villages involving loss of lives of men, women, children and useful animals, or when I came to read the startling news of some earthquakes shaking the foundations of and demolishing houses and burying or maiming under their debris hundreds of men, women, children and animals, I imagined that in all that horrible destruction, the goodness of good God was working. What a horrible blind faith! But this blind faith could not long continue its hold on my heart. The growing evolution of the forces of love of truth and goodness at last completely demolished it."

FEELINGS BLESSED AT THE CHANGE.

Freedom from the dreadful and huge fiction of God-belief made Bhagwan feel very happy and blessed. He continues further in the same article :—

"This was indeed a most blessed moment. Nature (whom I considered as a secondary relation before) had to pass through a great struggle to bring about this blessed event. Besides various kinds of objective phenomena in Nature, the part which my own forces of love of truth and goodness played and the callous and horrible persecutions which I suffered at the hands of the theists, had a marvellous effect in eradicating from my mind this false belief of God. What a delightful event this was! It now opened wide the gates for that unique child whom Nature had manifested after millions of years of hard struggles, and whom it had tended, fostered and evolved through the agency of its evolutionary phenomena to accomplish the unique ideal which Nature had meant for it—the ideal of all-rounded supreme service of its evolutionary process and higher harmonious relation with all its kingdoms. The Nature which I had erroneously believed to be my secondary relation, now became in the light of truth as my true relation. And completely breaking my relation with the imaginary creator and ruler of Nature, I felt my true and real relation of all kinds with the true and real Nature.

"About two years before this blessed event, I was staying at Bhatinda. I used to go into a jungle for walk along with my family members. There too, as in several other places, I used to feel deeply drawn towards Nature. I had composed a poem there embodying my feelings towards Nature which runs as under:—

प्रकृत तव संग मैं मिल जाऊं ।

नेचर तव संग मैं जुड़ जाऊं ।

देवत को आधार बनाकर, तेरे संग नित प्रेम बढ़ाऊं । १
 तेरे पक्षी रंग रंगीले, करें गीत जो मधुर सुरीले;
 पुष्प लता और पत्र रसीले, देख २ मैं आनन्द पाऊं । २
 बन में पशु चरें और डोलें, जल में मछली करें किलोलें;
 पुष्पों पर तीतरियां खेलें, उन्हें मैं अपना मीत बनाऊं । ३
 प्रातः काल सूरज की अभा, रात समय तारों की शोभा;
 देख चांद की सुन्दर परभा, जीवन रस से मैं भर जाऊं । ४

इत्यादि

(*Vide Jiwan Path*, Jeth 1962-B, Vol. 5, No. 2.)

Free translation :—

O Nature! may I get united with thee,
 May I establish harmony with thee,
 Making *Devat* as my basis,
 I may deepen day by day my love for thee.
 Thy birds possess variegated colours,
 And they sing melodious songs ;
 Flowers, ivys and green leaves,
 When seen by me fill my heart with delight,
 The animals graze and loiter in jungles,
 The fishes play in water,
 The butterflies hop from flower to flower,
 I want to love them all.
 The dawn of sun's light at day break,
 The beauty of stars at night,
 And the beautiful sight of the moon light,
 Fill my heart with nectar of life, etc., etc.

“ The longing that I had expressed in that song of my heart to establish my higher harmonious union with Nature, was at last realised when I was liberated from the false belief of the so-called creator and master of this Nature.”

UNMOVED BY COMBINATION OF ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES.

“ God-belief vanished from my mind,” says Bhagwan Dev Atma further on in the same series, “ but, it was the most trying period of life for me as :—

(a) I was passing through the dreadful persecutions at the hands of my opponents in the form of legal prosecutions.

(b) Some of my own followers committed certain heart-rending acts and indiscretions which struck hard at my already suffering heart. My nervous system was severely shaken and my whole

body suffered to such an extent that I was brought to the verge of death. I remember that fateful day when I was travelling from Lahore to Montgomery. I was lying on the wooden bench of a railway compartment in a prostrated and half-fainted condition. Two or three of my disciples who accompanied me, were sitting by me in a very sad and down-hearted condition. I was afraid I may pass away in the railway compartment. With extreme difficulty I reached Montgomery. During those days, there lived at Montgomery a European Civil Surgeon of very sympathetic nature. I sent to him the information of my weak and ailing state. He was good enough to come to my residential quarters and examine me. He very kindly commenced my treatment with true sympathy and regard. After a continuous treatment for many days and good wishes of higher souls, I recovered from that attack.

"(c) Kumari Dr. Prem Devi—the true devotee of Dev Dharm the most loyal worker of the Samaj and my dependent *Sewaka*, who had been ailing for several months from the most horrible and fell disease of phthisis—had reached a very critical state of health.

"(d) All doors of help and sympathy outside the sphere of my Samaj were closed against me because of the intensive and extensive propaganda of vilifications and persecutions set against me and my mission by my opponents. The result was that besides my undergoing great pains and shocks on that account, we had to pass through great financial straits both for our ordinary needs and the expenses of litigation.

"(e) I had a few followers then. And this false belief of God had taken (through my own practices) such a strong hold on them, that it was gravely feared that the declaration by me of the change in my belief would very adversely and painfully affect them.

"(f) Besides my own disciples, I had very grave fears that people outside Dev Samaj would secure one more strong weapon to persecute me, and injure my mission on account of this change in my belief.

"It is true I was beset by various kinds of such persecutions, difficulties, anxieties and sorrows. *But as a hurricane lamp of high order continues even amidst violent storms, to give its light undimmed, in the same way my own light of the complete love of truth shone undimmed amidst all this storm that had enveloped me.* No amount of persecutions, prosecutions, heart-shocks, troubles and anxieties could in the least blow it off or dim that light. I was standing on the bed-rock of truth. The most horrible waves of ocean reached that rock and struck at it with great ferocity. But I was not at all afraid of anything. *I was certain that the ship of my life-vow would not be wrecked by the raging storm of opposition* and it would surely and positively anchor safe on the shore. And this is what actually happened.

"The eighth anniversary of the Dev Samaj was approaching fast. I applied myself heart and soul, as soon as I recovered a little from

my illness, in making preparations for the occasion. A day before the anniversary, Kumari Prem Devi breathed her last. I had had to put forth great efforts to sustain her during her dangerous illness and to keep her soul elevated and at peace. When she died, I had a severe attack of diarrhœa. And this was again the first anniversary occasion in which I had kept no engagement in the programme in relation to God.

“An ordinary man is liable to imagine that all my bodily ailments, financial straits and other calamities could be due to my renunciation of the belief in God or to His wrath. But no such absurd idea or fancy cropped up in my mind.”

THE MAGICAL INFLUENCE OF BHAGWAN'S UNIQUE SOUL-FORCES ON HIS BODY.

Continues Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

“In spite of my being very ill I, by the sheer dint of my will, got up from my bed on the inaugural day of the *utsav*. I took bath, put on my dress and reached the meeting-place in a carriage. Pandit Dina Nath Bali, photographer, was already there with his camera. He took a photograph of mine with some of my other family members. It was very difficult for me even to walk a few steps or sit on the dias for a few minutes, as my body was considerably enfeebled. But with the help of a stick, I slowly walked a short distance and took my seat on the dias. I began the proceedings of the meeting. When the time approached for my address, I commenced to deliver an extempore speech. My higher feelings so completely possessed me, that it was difficult for the audience to realise that an ailing person with a considerably enfeebled health was speaking. The meeting continued for several hours. I grew quite unconscious of my bodily state and position. On the close of the meeting, I was again photographed. Both these photographs are in my possession. A comparison between both these photographs can very eloquently impress upon the observer the fact as to how far my awakened higher forces and the service which I thus rendered to those present had filled me with light and power, and perceptibly influenced even my face. Though the time intervening between the taking of these photographs was a few short hours, yet the difference between these both was so great.

“This eighth Anniversary of the Dev Samaj held in the month of February 1895 was the first anniversary occasion in its history, in which all religious functions which used to be held in previous years in relation to God disappeared for ever.”

VI

THE GREAT PURPOSE IMPLIED IN NATURE'S EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's reflections at this stage on the purpose implied in the evolutionary process of Nature are worth deep and serious consideration, as they offer a key to his most optimistic faith in the ultimate triumph of his unique mission. He says in Chapter 22 of his *Autobiography*, Vol. 1. :—

“ Every phenomenon in Nature is wonderful in itself. But the working of the law of evolution in the universe is simply marvellous. Leaving the whole universe aside when we confine our attention to our solar system only, we witness the amazing phenomena even in its evolution. The story of earth's evolution—how it broke from the burning sun ; how it began rotating and revolving round it, assuming a spherical shape ; how it gradually cooled down ; how the inorganic force was transformed into inorganic life-force at first and then into unicellular organic life-force ; how from these unicellular beings were evolved, in the course of millions of years, the multicellular plant and animal existences ; and further on how in the course of animal evolution man appeared from them and gradually evolved his mental and linguistic faculties ; and how this new being climbing the ladder of progress emerged from its primitive savage state and developed into the present civilised being—all this offers such a marvel to study for the scientists that it simply beggars all description. Throughout the grand process of evolution working in Nature, we can witness clearly the one implied purpose that some day one such soul should evolve, who should not only co-operate with all that is really good in civilisation, but who should be possessed of the power to redeem man from the control of his degrading forces which have driven him, in spite of his civilization, to produce lot of harm, misery and pain, not only in other kingdoms but mostly in his own kingdom, *i.e.*, humanity, and to open for mankind that path of higher life which should reclaim it from the inevitable effects of its incomplete soul organism, which have produced (a) a state of disharmony not only in other kingdoms of Nature but in man's own all international, national and even near relations owing to his ignorance, ill-will, undue attachments and evil conduct, (b) various kinds of prevalent false-beliefs and harmful faiths and superstitions in the name of religion, owing to his ignorance of true knowledge of *Dharm*, and (c) greatest harm through his darkness about the true and supreme ideal of life ; *who should propagate the teachings of One True Science-grounded Religion for all mankind* in place of the cobweb of false and fiction-grounded creeds ; who should help man to find on this very earth the true heavenly atmosphere of harmonious relations in place of the imaginary sensual heavens of fiction-grounded faiths, by evolving in his soul higher and altruistic

Dharmic feelings along with imparting to him the true light regarding his soul-life; who should further enable man to get freedom from those low loves which bind him in various relations and thus produce misery and harm for all, and to establish higher harmonious relationship with mineral, vegetable, animal and human worlds and thus in place of proving a source of misery to them, grow really useful and serviceable to them. And thus a new and true heavenly era may dawn on this earth by the teachings of the Science-grounded system of religion and the higher religious exercises.

“Nature—which, to fulfil the above unique object, has, at last after millions of years of travail, produced in its own course that unique soul, and preserving him safe in its bosom, made him pass through various evolutionary phenomena, and thus completed and evolved every unique psychic force in him and given him a complete soul organism or *Dev Rup*—produced such conditions as enabled this child of his to give up belief in God-myth, realising it as an obstacle in his further progress. Hence nothing could be more propitious than this, that in the interests of the accomplishment of this supreme purpose of Nature and my continuous progress and evolution, this wrong belief should be wholly and completely effaced from my mind. That day indeed was the most blessed and auspicious day—a day pregnant with an unimaginable good and blessings not only for me, not only for mankind but also for the animal, vegetable and inorganic kingdoms—when I awoke to the falsehood of God-belief and realised and accepted Nature as the one abiding reality.”

ONE ABSOLUTE FIRST CAUSE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma altogether gave up belief in God as a Person in 1895, and God-worship, therefore, vanished from the Dev Samaj. But says Bhagwan in Chapter 26 of his *Autobiography*, Vol. I:—

“In this year (*i.e.*, 1895) I got some very good books on this subject, (*i. e.*, evolution). Out of these, the book which proved of great benefit to me was *First Principles* by Herbert Spencer. I also found the study of ‘Ascent of Man’ by Professor Drummond, ‘*Cosmic Philosophy*’ by Fiske based on the teachings of Herbert Spencer, and ‘*Origin of Species*’ by Darwin, etc., very profitable. I had already given up belief in God as a person, but as snake leaves behind a trail on sand or dust, in the same way, though God-belief disappeared, it remained in my mind, in the form of ‘First cause.’ According to Herbert Spencer’s theory, behind the world of phenomena there should be one absolute and first cause. By reading that my belief in the existence of Nowmenun not only remained but grew stronger. Monism or a sort of Vedantism is based upon this conception of Nowmenun behind all phenomena. It is this belief which holds that impersonal ‘first cause’ has manifested itself in the phenomenal world as matter and force and assumed innumerable forms. This first cause is the manifestor of universe and it is the universe, and is, therefore, both the cause and effect in itself. It is matter and it is force.

"But the *contradiction involved in all this idea dawned on me after a short time and this trail of false serpent also was obliterated.* I could see, that all the various phenomena composed of two different things—matter and force—should have two kinds of causes and not one. When there was no existence in the universe which was not composed of both matter and force, when matter and force in their nature were not one but were two differently constituted things, and when neither of them resolves into another, but both of them retained their different characteristics in spite of their inseparableness, then in that case the first cause of the universe could not be one but were both these factors, *i.e.*, force and the matter. These two things matter and force are eternal in their nature. They are inseparable. They always influence and change each other. This ceaseless change in them produces ceaseless change in the universe and there is no existence in Nature which is outside the control of the universal and immutable law of change. This immutable law of change assumes two forms called evolution or progress and dissolution or degeneration.

"Herbert Spencer was a great student, a great evolutionist and an extraordinary thinker. I cherish very high regard for him and I feel very grateful to him too, as also to some other writers whose books I have read. His writings contain many precious truths regarding several subjects. But as he was devoid of several higher heart-forces, he has, as could be expected, drawn quite wrong inferences about man's future life and his destiny. According to such erroneous conclusions of his man's life appears and wholly and completely ends on this earth, *i.e.*, no individual life of man remains after his physical demise. Similarly he has blundered in his conclusions about the origin and destiny of the universe."

VII

THE ERRORS INVOLVED IN THE BELIEF IN GOD'S EXISTENCE.

In his *Autobiography*, Volume I, Bhagwan Dev Atma has devoted a full chapter (Chapter 23) describing the erroneous reasonings involved in the God-belief. We give here a free translation thereof :—

“I wrote a series of articles in 1889 in the columns of my Urdu journal, *Dharm Jiwan*, in order to prove the existence of God. In the same year, I republished them in the form of a book under the title of ‘*Proofs of the Existence of God.*’ I had tried to prove the existence of God on three grounds, *viz* :—

1. The work of God's power in the mineral world.
2. The work of God's power in the body of man.
3. The work of God's power in the soul of man.

“In support of the first of the above grounds, I said that as in the case of a man-made book, we have to admit the existence of an intelligent author of it, if we find therein some discussions and conclusions relating to the knowledge about Nature; in the same way, we have to admit the existence of an intelligent author behind the book of this infinite Nature, of which that man is merely an infinitesimal part, and that this author is God.

“In support of my second ground, I said that there are several bodily organs of man which do not move by man's own will—*viz.*, lungs, liver, heart, etc. These organs must work by the will of somebody. That somebody is God.

“I support of the third ground, I said that there must be somebody who is the author of that beauty of higher life, that felicity of mind and those higher urges which we feel in our soul when the higher feelings are awakened. That somebody is God.

“The error involved in all these three arguments was as regards the ignorance about nature of energy or force and the deductions based upon that. In order to have correct knowledge of force or energy and draw correct logical inferences about it we ought to have previous knowledge of the following truths :—

1. That this universe is composed of force and matter.
2. That in their *sum total* both force and matter are indestructible.
3. That matter and force are inseparably connected with each other—*i.e.*, under no circumstances can any of them exist apart from the other.
4. That force by its working brings about changes in matter and by this working it itself also undergoes changes into various forms. Various kinds of existences and phenomena in this universe

come into being by the change that these both—force and matter—undergo.

“If you really believe in these four fundamental truths, the existence of Omniscient and All-Good God as Creator of this universe proves a fiction.

“This force working in Nature has in millions of years of its ceaseless changes assumed two forms :—

1. Non-living inorganic blind forces of heat, light, electricity, etc.

2. Living organic forces in plant, animal and human existences.

“Now none of these forces possesses any of the attributes associated with the supposed person called God. Let us see whether any of the inorganic non-living forces is God. Is the force of gravitation God? Is that power God which gives warmth, produces chemical changes in the mineral substances, burns up wood, cooks several foodstuffs into various new forms, ripens fruits of trees, gives them new forms and tastes, makes the wind sultry, etc., etc? Is electricity God which serves to convey telegraphic communications of man, helps in gilding various metallic things, runs motor cars etc., etc.? Is the light of sun God which produces variety of beautiful colours in the vegetable world, which enables us to see various forms with our eyes? Is the power of steam God which, working in engines, moves thousands of tons of weight and carries passengers to very long distances? Theists shall have to admit that none of these forces is God. Let us proceed further. We ask, ‘Is any of those multifarious life-forces God which work in millions of plant, animal and human existences?’ Even to this question, the theists would return a negative reply.

“Now all those life-forces which live in human beings and keep them alive are called souls. These souls are millions in number. It is because of this life-force that several organs in the body of man like heart and lungs work and move. All these organs abandon their activity as soon as this life-power or soul leaves the body. No God, therefore, moves these organs of man’s body but it is the life-force of man himself which moves them. Ordinarily it is a fact that these organs do not obey the will of man. But there are cases in which men have been able, by gradual practice to suspend at will the activity of their heart for some time.

“Human souls differ in their qualities. There are some souls who are utterly destitute of the powers which we find in some other souls. Higher feelings of reverence, sympathy, gratitude, etc., are not found in all men; and if they manifest themselves in any souls, they appear and grow, by the same process of Nature, by which lower feelings of lust, greed, etc., grow in them.....

“The greatest blunder involved in God-belief which is found even in many thinking people, and of which I too was a victim, is

about the logical deductions regarding it. Now it is a principle of sound logic that whatever can be proved by direct experiment should not be left at the mercy of imagination or *a priori* reasoning. If a young man comes to us and produces before us a university degree for B.A. certifying that Mr. Gurdial has passed that examination and the young man also gives his name as Gurdial, we have no ground for concluding merely on this data that the man before us is really a graduate, because he gives his name as Gurdial, and because the degree is alleged to have been conferred upon Gurdial and because the degree bears the seal of the university and signature of the Chancellor. In all this we shall have to assume many things while we have the means of testing the truth of Mr. Gurdial's assertion by directly putting him to the test. We can directly know whether he possesses ability up to that standard, by testing his knowledge of the subjects in which he claims to have passed. If we find by this test that his knowledge comes up to that standard, we might believe him to be a B.A. But if we know by direct proof that he cannot even read and write in any language, while his knowledge of mathematics is cipher, we shall have to ignore his degree and conclude that he is not a B.A.

"So far as God-belief is concerned there lies the greatest necessity of testing His existence by this direct proof. When it is asserted that God is Omniscient and All-good, and He loves us more than our parents, and always wishes for our great good, why should we not test his omniscience by asking him certain questions on some grave topic and test his all-good nature by soliciting his help at the hour of serious illness by requesting him to give us the right prescription? If by such direct test, we get proof of the existence of any such being, other than any human being, or departed soul, we can by all means believe him as God, *Khuda*, *Ishwara*, etc. But can we get any proof of the existence of such a God by direct test? Never. In fact, no such being as God at all exists. This belief is really the result of the fancy of man or his false superstitious bias. In fact such a being is an absolute myth and exists nowhere. I have dealt with this subject in detail in a book, 'False belief in God and its most baneful and horrible results.' I have proved in that book that not only God is a fiction, but that belief in God is also most harmful."

It will be most useful to quote here the challenge that Bhagwan Dev Atma threw before theists of all denominations, which none has ever dared to take up though many claim even direct communion with God and thus fool the world that God is with them :—

A CHALLENGE TO ALL GOD-BELIEVERS OF EVERY DENOMINATION.

The following is the English translation of an Urdu letter sent by registered post, by the Secretary of the Dev Samaj to the Secretary of the Arya Samaj, Ferozepore City (College Section) in reply to his letter dated 28th January, 1918, inviting *Shastrarth* (debate)

on the existence of God on the occasion of the anniversary that was said to be held on 22nd, 23rd and 24th February, 1918:—

“ No. 74.

Dev Samaj Head Office,

Lahore, 7th February, 1918.

To

The Secretary Arya Samaj,

College Section,

Ferozepore.

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 28th January 1918, in which you have requested us to hold *Shastrath* or debate with you on the subject of the existence of God. In reply thereto, I beg to state for your information that it was several years ago that the Dev Samaj threw a *challenge* to the entire theistic world and invited them to prove the existence of the so-called God by certain tests laid down therein. The challenge was published in several issues of the '*Jiwan Tatwa*'—a weekly organ of the Dev Samaj—in the year 1912. This was repeated by being republished in a tract form and distributed broadcast. But none of the theists, whether from any of the sections of the Arya Samaj or from any other God-believing community, ever came forward to take up the gauntlet. Our challenge, therefore, remains open up to this day.

I am sure you know that the Dev Samaj believes in the teachings of a *Science-grounded system of religion*, and *rejects all fiction-grounded faiths*. Now Science has laid down certain principles for guidance in the investigation of Truth, and one of these principles is that any matter which can be proved by means of *experimental test* should be subjected to that *test alone*, and by means of that alone we should decide as to the truth or falsehood of that matter.

The Dev Samaj accepts the validity of the principle. And on the basis of this principle, it has arrived at this *absolutely certain conclusion* that no such person exists whom the theists declare to be an 'Omniscient and Omnipotent Being.' The Dev Samaj, therefore, advises all such persons *as prefer truth to falsehood*, and are ready to *accept* the former and *reject* the latter, to eschew this false God-belief and renounce all those false doctrines as are based on and promulgated about that false faith, which foresooth has proved most detrimental to the interests of human as well as sub-human worlds of the universe.

But a questions arises here, 'Can God, in whose existence millions of persons believe, be subjected to any such *scientific test* or experiment?' Certainly, we say. Just as university does not confer the degree of B.A. on any candidate, on his mere assertion that he possesses the requisite amount of knowledge, but demands from him to actually pass a prescribed *test*; likewise when any God-believer asserts that his God exists and is the Creator of this world

and is 'Omnipotent' and 'Omniscient' and wants us to hold *Shastrarth* on that subject, our reply is that all that he asserts is such as *scientific test alone can conclusively* decide, and therefore an appeal to controversy as a proof of his assertions is quite *unmeaning and irrational*. For instance, suppose a man were to allege that the renowned athlete of Madras named Rammurti can break a heavy chain and bear the strain of a huge elephant passing over his chest, and others deny these assertions, while at the same time Rammurti himself is living and present, could these disputes be decided by mere wrangling in words? Certainly not. At this juncture, the experimental test *alone* would be an *irrefutable and complete proof of the truth or falsehood of this assertion*. On account of this very reason Rammurti himself did not ask the people to accept his claim by issuing large notices of debate or *Shastrarth*, but he demonstrated his strength by *actually performing his aforesaid feats* of breaking the iron chain and letting the elephant pass over his chest, in the presence of thousands of people. Hence, if your God *really exists* and is really an 'All-knowing' and 'All-powerful' living person, as you claim him to be, why does he not himself take up our challenge and demonstrate his existence and attributes by means of the *tests* proposed therein, and why does he depend upon unauthorised advocates* like you? Or why don't you hold consultation with him and accept our Challenge? As no candidate for the degree of the Bachelor of Arts who possesses any sense of *self-respect*, would shrink from undergoing the *test* of examination, and thus deserving the degree, in the same way if you or your God possess any sense of self-respect, you or he ought not to *shrink* from accepting our challenge.

This challenge of ours which we published in several issues of *Jiwan Tattwa* in 1912, and again reissued it in tract form, we once more quote here for your information and acceptance :—

"God-believers assert that the person whom they call *Ishwara* "*Khuda*" or God and believe him to be the object of worship,

- (1) is the Creator or Maker of all the worlds and has created or made the earth on which we live, and also the sun which gives to it light ;
- (2) is Omniscient, that is, knows everything ;
- (3) is Omnipotent, that is, All-Powerful—the earth moves on its axis with his power, and sun and the planets also move by his power.

The Dev Samaj declares that none of these assertions is *proved* to be true when put to *test*.

*For you have not sent us any authorised brief which you hold in God's behalf !

"Now with a view to *test the validity* of the first assertion, we place a small quantity of moist clay on a table and challenge the God-believers to ask their God to make two or three small balls of one inch diameter each out of it, because a God who can make big globes like our earth, having a diameter of nearly 8,000 miles, should certainly be able to make two or three such small balls. If he is not able to do so, as surely a *mythical* and *imaginary being* can never do such a thing, it would clearly *prove* that first assertion of God-believers is nothing but false.

"With a view to test the validity of the second assertion, we place a printed book, some blank paper and a pencil on a table, and challenge the God-believers to ask their God to write down on the blank paper with the pencil, the portion of the closed book which we may mentally desire him to write, because a God who is able to read the secrets of the hearts of men, should certainly be able to read what is written on a particular page of a closed book. Now if he is not able to do so, as surely no *mythical* or imaginary being can ever be able to do so, it would clearly prove that the second assertion of the God-believers is also nothing but false.

"With a view to test the validity of the third assertion of God-believers, we place our stopped watch on the table and challenge God-believers to ask their God to wind it or make it go, because a God who can whirl round this large globe of our earth, should certainly be able to wind the spring of a watch and make its wheels go. Now if he is not able to do so as a *mythical* and mere imaginary being can never do so, it would clearly prove that their third assertion is also nothing but false.

"Besides ordinary God-believers, such people as claim that they *see* God face to face and hold *direct conversation* or communion with him, have particularly a *good chance of proving* the truth of their claims by accepting this challenge. We invite them to prove their assertions about the attributes of their God, enumerated above, according to the *tests* we have laid down in this challenge, in the presence of one hundred selected persons. If they cannot do so, let them abandon their claim of being followers of Truth and let them not mislead others by spreading *wrong beliefs*.

"I want to know from you whether you are prepared to *accept* our challenge; for in the event of your accepting it, we shall arrange to *test* your God here in Lahore, which is the capital of the Punjab and let the public know the results.

"You must be aware that before science proved water to be a chemical compound of two gases—hydrogen and oxygen—it was believed to be one of the elements, not only by people of other countries but by our own countrymen as well. Now suppose, there is a hot controversy going on about the composition of water, some orthodox people saying that it is an element and not a chemical compound, others asserting that it is composed of not two but three gases, and others again declaring that it is composed of five gases,

how can all this controversy be set at rest? Will you appeal to *Shastrarth* to settle the whole dispute? Certainly not. For, in the case of *Shastrarth*, would it not happen that everyone would hold fast to his own individual opinion and reckon it as correct? Is not appeal to *test* then the only sure way of finding the *Truth*?

"It is because various theists have *ignored* this *sure method of arriving at Truth* that they continue to believe in *contradictory* teachings alleged to have been given by the *same* God, who is also believed by them to be 'All-knowing' and present everywhere. Just see what prevails in your own Arya Samaj; one section of it believes that *flesh-eating* is *right*, while the other section believes that it is quite *wrong* and *sinful*. This difference has continued to prevail in your own Samaj for years to this day, you have come to no *agreement* or solution of the difficulty by your *pet method of Shastrarth*. There are theists who declare your teachings about *Niyog* to be an out and out *adultery* and a most *sinful* practice; while many in your own Samaj consider it *right* and *proper*. Your *Shastrarth*" has *failed*, as it must, to bring about the needed agreement. Again, some of the leading men in your Arya Samaj have from time to time declared that there are people in the Arya Samaj *who do not believe in God*. Why don't you in the first instance bring them round by your method of *Shastrarth*?

"Since all Theists believe that their God *is one and the same person*, why do they then hold and propagate different and, in good many cases, quite *contradictory teachings* with regard to such doctrines as 'worship,' 'virtue and vice and their fruits,' 'pilgrimages' 'Avtars', etc., and why don't they *consult their so-called 'Omnipresent and Omniscient God'* and *settle their differences*? If the so-called Omniscient and Omnipotent God is a *living person* and *not fiction*, why does he allow such contradictory or different teachings to prevail *in his own name*, and why does he not summon all theists before himself and remove all their aforesaid differences?

"Thus if you really believe in the efficacy of your method of *Shastrarth*, why not apply it first in your own Samaj, and remove the various differences that exist therein? Remember that what Nature has made impossible, can never be made possible by any wrong method or by hook or crook, by any man on earth. Hence attempting to prove by *Shastrarth* what experiment or *practical test alone* can decide, is a *vain attempt* opposed as much to *sound reason* and *logic* as *belied by past human experience*.

"Let me, in the end, request you that if you consider Truth as *preferable* to falsehood and worthy of acceptance, do not hesitate to accept our *challenge*. Come out boldly into the arena. Let your God be *tested scientifically*, and if your assertions prove *unfounded*, eschew them. But can you do that? I have grave doubts as to your doing so. For, leaving aside yourself, if any of the Theists could have had the courage to accept our *challenge*, *he would* have done so long ago during the *past six years*.

Besides the above challenge, Bhagwan Dev Atma published another leaflet on the subject in the same year, *i.e.*, April 1918, which also we give below :—

GOD-MYTH—WHAT IT LEADS TO? AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC.

“The Dev Samaj has been engaged, for many years past, in the great task of liberating humanity from the God-myth and various other mythical beliefs and superstitions based on it, that have done incalculable harm to individuals, homes, societies and nations.

This huge myth has in the past led to—

- (a) The so-called religious wars—crusades and *jehads*,
- (b) Inquisitions with their horrible tortures and barbarous and cruel deaths,
- (c) Vandalism, *i.e.*, destruction of various kinds of arcrafts and literature,
- (d) Demolition of sacred places of others such as temples and images, etc.
- (e) Slavery,
- (f) Slave-trade,
- (g) Massacres of innocent men, women and children,
- (h) Plunder and devastation,
- (i) Various kinds of sectarian persecutions,
- (j) Slaughter of millions of innocent and useful animals for propitiation as ‘ sacrifice ’ and for food,
- (k) Priest-craft with its dreadful results,
- (l) Blind and irrational faith in the infallibility of the so-called revealed books and miracles with their necessary evils,
- (m) Great obstruction in the progress of the secular knowledge and liberty of thought.

“Not only in the past but even in our own times, this wrong belief is proving a fertile source of incalculable mischief and harm. It leads to

(A) Immoral and dangerous teachings *such as* :—

- (a) *Niyog*—an open and hideous form of adultery,
- (b) Polygamy,
- (c) Slaughter of useful and innocent animals for sacrifice and food.

(B) Sectarian jealousy, bigotry and fanaticism which breed :—

- (a) *Hatred* in one section of human beings against another, showing itself in their mutual ill-feelings, false accusations, and scurrilous writings, etc.
- (b) Riots and disturbances of public peace.

(C) Priest-craft and blind faith in the so-called infallible books and miracles.

And above all this wrong and dangerous myth

(D) Blocks the way of millions from seeking and receiving true knowledge of self and hence of *True Dharma*, based on the unshakable bedrock of *facts* and *laws of Nature*, and not on the supposed inspiration or revelation of an imaginary being.

To explode this God-belief which has plunged humanity in—

(a) Numerous false and mischievous beliefs, and

(b) Numerous horrible *evils* and *crimes*, thus bringing great ruin and harm to man and to other sub-human beings as shown above,

the Dev Samaj has published a number of tracts and pamphlets dealing with the God-myth from different standpoints—logical, scientific, moral and practical.

While the Dev Samaj, in the light of its unique Founder and Guide Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan, is carrying on the campaign against and demolishing this most harmful false belief on the one hand, it is propagating, on the other, the teachings of *true religion*, which are based on the eternal *bedrock of facts and laws of Nature* and which are consequently not only *Science-grounded*, but same *for all mankind*. Besides this, by the highest and the unique psychic powers of its Master, it has redeemed hundreds and thousands of persons from various sins and crimes, has led to hundreds of voluntary retributions by people who have returned thousands of rupees to the original defrauded owners and has evolved some higher or *Satwik* forces which *impel* men to direct their energies to the *service* of human and sub-human worlds. Thus this two sided *wonderful work of enlightening and reclaiming souls and ennobling their lives is progressing day by day*.

We, therefore, appeal to all rational and unbiased people, to carefully *study* the pamphlets and books published by the Dev Samaj, which conclusively refute God-belief and describe the *immense harm* that it has done to human and sub-human worlds, and after being *convinced* of the *falsity* of God-belief, to help in the noble cause of demolition of this great Untruth and in propagation of Truth about the One, Universal, Science-grounded Religion.

Those who are willing to help in this supremely noble cause can do so by *circulating* such literature as widely as possible and by *contributing* to the cost of its publication or by *purchasing* a large number of copies for free distribution to all *fit* persons or by *sending* names and addresses of such persons as are *expected to be interested* in this cause to the undersigned.

COMPLETE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT.

The renunciation of belief in God opened a new and wonderful chapter in the life of Bhagwan Dev Atma. How this change led Bhagwan into a new world of study and investigation is thus described by Bhagwan Dev Atma himself :—

“As said before this, renunciation of belief in God opened a new chapter in my life. Having stepped into this new world of thought, I realised the investigation into the nature of universe and that of its part—the man—as the most imperious and essential task of my life. *Vishwa* (Universe) *Tattwa* and *Manush* (Man) *Tattwa* formed the chief topics of my study. The scientific methods of investigation which were imperative for the researches into these domains gradually acquired sovereign sway over my heart. The love of experimental interrogation had so completely possessed me and had become such an integral part of my mind that it was absolutely impossible for any fiction or false belief to stay there. Why is it that we find hundreds of thinkers, even some of the scientists, entangled in the meshes of false belief? It is because—

(a) either they consider religion to be a matter of faith and above scientific test, or

(b) they distort scientific truths or theories to support their wrong religious beliefs.

“For a lover of truth both these positions are worthy of being eschewed. The lover of truth considers both these biases as harmful and obstructive and enjoins that they should be given up. Owing to the evolution of all-sided love of truth in me, I had arrived at a stage of development in which I could accept old or new beliefs only after placing them on the touch-stone of scientific test. I had already abandoned the above two positions. I was anxious to test everyone of my religious beliefs on the basis of scientific test and thus make them matters of true knowledge rather than that of mere faith.

“As light and darkness are not one but are diametrically opposed to each other, in the same way true knowledge and blind faith are not one and the same thing. In their very texture, they are contradictory. Now the pencil with which I am writing, is what it is, *i.e.*, it is composed of wood and graphite. As such it is not made of iron and clay or coal and paper or brass and antimony, gold or silver, etc., etc. Taking truth as our basis, we have to take it as composed of wood and graphite. But on the basis of blind faith alone it can be believed to be composed of various other and different component parts. That is according to some it can be composed of iron and clay, according to others of coal and paper, to some of brass and antimony and still to some more of gold and silver, so on and so forth.

“*What man needs, is true knowledge which is immutable and not blind beliefs which are the creatures of imagination or fancy.*

The blind beliefs having entangled man in their cobwebs suck up his vitality. Indeed who can realise the extent of my blessedness, gratification, great privilege and supreme good fortune which I experienced, when I got the glory and sublimity of the process of higher evolution having dawned in my soul? What a great good fortune it is for a man to get free from the entanglements of false beliefs and step on the high road of evolution! What a matter of just pride and blessedness it is for humanity—millions of whose children are caught up in the quagmire of innumerable false beliefs—to be gifted in the course of its higher evolution, with the manifestation of one who is possessed of the one great passion to get true knowledge in all relations and who has evolved all those higher loves which give rise to the above sublime desire!!! It is indeed the highest privilege for any man to unite himself with such a unique manifestation by ties of love.

“It is indeed a most harrowing and heart-breaking sight to see how millions upon millions of human beings in this or other lands on this planet, are being led astray from the true path of higher life under the sway of false beliefs and how many among them are wasting away the higher heart-forces which they have received in heredity from their ancestors. How sad and painful is the condition of these unfortunate men! Alas! neither their fiction-begotten God, nor any god or goddess helps them out of this mire. Many of the theists make a lip profession of a prayer to the so-called God in the following couplet:—

“असती मा सदमन, तमसो मा व्योतिगर्मेय ।”

Translation :—‘Take us from Untruth to Truth; take us from darkness to light.’

But these parrot-like repetitions of the couplet do not and cannot help them; because in the first place he whom the prayer is addressed, is a fiction and in the second place those who offer this prayer are not only not above those psychic forces (low-loves and low-hates) which drag them to untruth and rob them of even the desire of getting above them but they are destitute of the knowledge and the desire to possess those higher loves which lead to Truth. Hence their false prayer, as is only inevitable, proves fruitless.

FOR WHOM CAN THE PROGRESSIVE PATH OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE OPEN?

Bhagwan Dev Atma has shed a wonderful light on the problem as to the possibility of opening the perennial path of progressive true knowledge for human soul. He writes:—

“As no disease can be effectively treated if you keep intact all the conditions which have produced and developed it, in the same way it is impossible for the eternal path of progressive true knowledge to open for any soul if he is ruled by those forces which imperiously lead him to untruth, and deprive him of the chances of going towards truth by deepening their hold upon him. As

a horse tied to a pole in a grazing field with a rope 100 ft. long can graze only within the circumference of the circle described by that radius and no further; in the same way, a man, however learned and cultured he may be, can never enter the world of progressive true knowledge if he is held down by low-loves and low-hates and is devoid of those various and all-sided highest psychic forces of Truth which have manifested themselves in me. It is true he can have the ability to search and have true knowledge in any department of Nature, if he possesses love for true knowledge in that branch. Hence it is impossible for any man to rise into the world of perennially progressive path of true knowledge, if he is void of the highest psychic forces of love of truth and hatred of untruth and does not possess adequate mental capacity.

“Why did a learned man like Herbert Spencer remain in darkness about the nature of his very life and its evolution and dissolution? It is because he did not possess those various and all-sided forces of love of truth which could manifest themselves in the heart of only that soul who, beside being above all low-loves and low-hates, was capable of evolving all-sided love for goodness along with the all-sided love of truth. What a unique privilege it was for me that I appeared on this planet with the heredity of those unique forces which opened for ever the gateway of true knowledge and true light generated by it!!”

ABSOLUTELY ERROR-FREE PATH POSSIBLE FOR NONE.

There are some souls who start a question that when Bhagwan Dev Atma had developed the highest psychic forces of love of Truth and Goodness and repulsion for untruth and wrong in his unique soul, how is it that he too committed errors in his search after truth? To this, Bhagwan Dev Atma has himself returned a reply in his *Autobiography*, Vol. I, Chapter xxvi, which we bodily quote here. The translation is free and not literal:—

“The path of acquiring true knowledge was for ever opened wide for me. But this path is not free from errors. It is not a path, treading on which man is not liable to go astray and fall into errors. Eternally error-free path is impossible for any one in Nature. It is not, therefore, possible for any man to tread an eternally and absolutely error-free path. Eyes have evolved in our bodily organism. Let eyes be as nice, as healthy and as keen as possible and yet at some time, in relation to some things, they are liable to fall into illusions. This is why several times man with eyes commits errors in recognising a thing. Man has ears. Let them be as nice, as sound and as discriminating as possible, and yet one falls into errors or illusions in recognising at one or other time some voice. Men have hands. Let them be as strong and as good as possible, and yet one is liable sometimes to let fall a thing he is holding. Men have feet. Let them be as steady and strong as possible, and yet they sometimes stumble and fall. Men possess good mental powers. Suppose one has mathematical brain, and by training he has acquired mastery over the subject; and yet it is

possible for him to fall into error while solving some problem. One may be an accomplished speaker, and possessed of mastery over a language; and yet he is liable to commit errors of speech or grammar. This is true about all other powers and senses.

“ But does this all mean that since men fall into errors through the senses of hearing, vision and bodily organs such as hands and feet, intellectual and vocal powers, etc., therefore they have no need for such sense organs and powers at all; or that the bodily organism is not affected for better or worse whether it possesses these senses, organs and powers or not? Is there no difference between a blind man and a man having eyes? Is there no difference between a handless man or cripple and one with sound hands and feet? Is there no difference between a man possessing intelligence and one without it? There is a difference and a world of difference between the two positions. The eyes and ears may sometimes lead to illusion. Hands and feet may sometimes commit errors. Intellect and power of speech may sometimes fall into blunders. But can any other organ perform the functions in man's body which are due from a specific organ? None whatsoever. Again, these errors and illusions do not occur at all times but are committed very seldom and are also corrected in course of time.

“ A blind *Faqir* used to say ‘ Eyes are a great blessing.’ This is true and perfectly correct. Want of eyes plunges the world into unrelieved darkness. All the various forms and colours of innumerable things and persons that surround us vanish from our sight when we are blind. This is exactly what happens in the case of the various forces of love of Truth and Goodness. Those, who are destitute of these glorious forces are incapable of directly seeing those truths about the organism of soul which the light of these psychic forces alone can show, and they are also devoid of the power which these unique forces generate, whereby one is able to get free from the bondage of low-loves and low-hates and thus develop pure noble life. Whenever any error crops up, it vanishes by itself when the suitable conditions arise, which are bound to come into being with the growth of these higher forces. My whole life is a living illustration of the above truth and affords a living example thereof.”

VIII

THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF THE RENUNCIATION OF GOD BELIEF.

Bhagwan Dev Atma says about this in Chapter xxvii of his *Autobiography*, Vol. I:—

“After I abandoned the belief in God and came to develop perfect love for the scientific method for arriving at truth, I could accept only such knowledge as was proved correct by that method. Nothing remained worthy of belief merely because it was ancient or modern, current or non-current, calamitous or non-calamitous, *swadeshi* or foreign. Whatever could be proved and tested as true by the scientific method, was alone worthy of acceptance for me, and an investigation into all that became the prime motive of my life.

“Having stepped into this new world:—

1. I developed national spirit more than before. With truth as basis I wanted to give teachings, lay down religious exercises and domestic rites and do all other things in conformity with national spirit, as I considered that in consonance with the law of evolution. Hence, the *brats* in regard to various cosmic relations which I had established were fixed by me as far as possible on the dates of Hindu festivals. I had already introduced the system of the audience sitting during worship meetings on the neat and matted or carpeted floor, of decorating the worship hall with flowers. The conductor was to sit on some raised platform with a wooden *bedi* in front. I introduced the system of expressing due respect and obeisance in relation to an elder by applying *chandan* (Sandal wood) on his forehead or garlanding him and making some offerings to him. I began the use of Hindi as Samaj language instead of Urdu and this Hindi was enriched not by Arabic words but Sanskrit vocabulary, as it was more akin to Hindi than Arabic. While I denounced as worthy of eschewing all such national customs as were based on falsehood and injustice, I retained all such customs and usages as were innocent and harmless.

“2. My knowledge of the law of relations grew fuller and more complete. I realised that a relationship which under certain conditions proved very beneficial, did not but breed harm in different set of circumstances. As for example, castor-oil which does good to a patient suffering from constipation, proves harmful in opposed conditions. Milk is beneficial to a child—a month old—while wheat proves fatal for it. Reading and writing are beneficial to a person possessing sound eyes but very injurious to one suffering from sore eyes. Marriage which proves healthful and good in certain set of conditions, proves utterly harmful in different set of conditions. To forgive an offender is good in certain cases but it is decidedly harmful

in certain other cases. To speak on some elevating subject proves under some circumstances highly beneficial to the hearer, while under different set of conditions the same speech proves harmful. Charity which proves of real good in one set of conditions, does real harm in other cases. In certain cases to receive a guest in one's house is advisable. In other cases it is harmful. It is profitable in certain cases to pay a visit to somebody. But in certain other cases it is wrong and harmful; so on and so forth. This principle or truth of *Adhikar Tattwa* (i.e., the principle of fitness or otherwise of a relation) manifested in my heart. It revealed to me the truth, that only according to the capacity or fitness of a man should the blessings of truth and goodness be communicated to him and not beyond that. The principle of evolution and the law of relations and *Adhikar Tattwa* are very closely connected. Hence with the growth of light in me about the law of evolution, my knowledge regarding the other two truths also developed.

"But let it be borne in mind that though it is not wise to give teachings to a man for which he possesses no *Adhikar* (fitness or capacity), yet it is never permissible, nay, it is utterly wrong to speak a lie to others or give false teachings to them or propagate untruth. Again, though it is not right in certain cases to give alms to others or forgive an offender, yet under no circumstances is it right or permissible to commit evil, wrong, sin or crime in relation to anybody.

"Being utterly devoid of the true knowledge of life of soul, several founders and propagandists of several creeds on this planet have actually imparted sinful, criminal and untrue teachings in order to achieve some worldly object or to save themselves from worldly harm. These teachings have done great wrong in the past and are doing incalculable harm in the present. All such teachings given in the name of God and religion have produced such horrible results and, instead of decreasing the load of sin, have in many cases so terribly added to it, that the mere thought of all that produces sickening sensation. And sooner such teachings in relation to soul are obliterated from the surface of the earth, the better it is for mankind.

"3. I felt an imperative need of establishing in a regular form various *brats* in different cosmic relations. The twelve *Yagyas* in relation to which the commandments were laid down by me up to that period are as under :—

1. *Yagya* in relation of parents and children.
2. *Yagya* in relation of brothers and sisters.
3. *Yagya* in relation of husband and wife.
4. *Yagya* in relation of master and servant.
5. *Yagya* in relation of Dev Guru.
6. *Yagya* in relation of fellow *sewaks*.
7. *Yagya* in relation of neighbours.
8. *Yagya* in relation of countrymen.

9. *Yagya* in relation of mankind.
10. *Yagya* in relation of vegetable world.
11. *Yagya* in relation of animal world.
12. *Yagya* in relation of mineral world.

"Besides this, I wrote down 40 commandments regarding what we should do and what should we avoid in relation to body and several injunctions regarding getting free from the impurities which a man, being led by low-loves and low-hates, commits in various relations.

"4. I felt an urgent need of delivering some discourses on the evolution of man to some of my *sewaks* ; which I did at Montgomery Ashram. The subjects dealt with by me in these discourses were as follows :—

1. When did man according to scientific discoveries appear on this earth ? 2. What kind of changes has he undergone in the past thousands of years from the primitive to the present civilised state ? 3. How did he develop his language ? 4. What kind of progress he made in the faculty of imagination and in some respects in his reasoning powers ? 5. How did the belief in various gods and goddesses develop in him ? 6. How did he begin to lay offerings of food, etc., before these deities to save himself from their supposed wrath or to appease them in order to achieve some object in life ? 7. What were the desires which he wanted to realise through prayers to these deities ? 8. How did he begin to acquire the capacity of knowing the existence of departed souls and believing in them, and how did he begin to believe the natural objects such as sun, moon, earth, water, wind, fire, etc., as gods ? How did he learn the practice of ancestor worship ? How out of polytheistic belief he "gradually learnt to worship one God ?"

All these lectures were delivered by Bhagwan extempore. But notes were taken down by Bhagwan's disciples. Bhagwan writes in his *Autobiography* :—"These notes of the lectures are with me. If the latter part of them were ever to come into print and published in a book form, it is bound to prove highly beneficial for readers."

PART VII
BECOMING A TRUE SIDHARTH,
OR
THE DISCOVERY AND PROPAGATION OF
THE TRUTHS OF SCIENCE-GROUNDED
SYSTEM OF RELIGION.

INTRODUCTION.

The history of Bhagwan Dev Atma's life is nothing but a story of the drama enacted by the unique highest psychic forces which manifested themselves in his unique soul. These wonderful forces of the complete and all-sided love for truth and goodness and the complete and all-sided hatred for untruth and wrong played a two-fold part in his life. As they gradually evolved, they firstly not only made the existence of every form of untruth and wrong impossible in his soul, but compelled him to wage a ceaseless and tremendous war against all forms of fiction and untruth that prevailed in the religious, social, political and other spheres of man's life, and all the forms of evil, that infested the world in daily dealings, usages, customs, religions, etc., of man. Secondly they impelled him to devote his all to bringing about the reign of truth and goodness in all relations of man in this world.

The renunciation of belief in the huge superstition of one God without a second, of which the monotheists seem to be so childishly fond, marked only a stage in the further evolution of these noblest forces. This belief was the last stronghold of fiction in the prevalent religions of the world. As soon as it was blown up, Nature—the one eternal reality—became an object of true study and research to Bhagwan Dev Atma.

While blind faith is the chief pillar on which the theists lean for their support, the stern canons of scientific method of investigation formed the only weapon of offensive and defensive work for Bhagwan Dev Atma in the vast regions of this infinite universe. Bhagwan Dev Atma, therefore, stepped now into a new era of life and work. Says Bhagwan Dev Atma, in Chapter XXVI of his *Autobiography*, Vol. I, which we fully translate :—

“ Having stepped into this new world of thought, all that remained for me as the most essential thing, was to carry on investigations regarding the universe—more particularly, in the domains of human world and human life, as a part of the universe. From this time, *Vishva Tattva* and *Manush Tattva* formed the chief topics of my study. The canons of scientific method of investigation which were essential in all such studies acquired complete sway over my heart. The principles of experimental interrogation together with right logic had captured my heart to such an extent, that it became impossible for me to accept any knowledge merely on the basis of imagination or blind faith. Why is it that some of the greatest thinkers and even some of the scientists are prone to accept several false and fictitious religious beliefs ? This is because :—

(1) either they consider religion to be a matter of blind faith and taboo every form of scientific investigation or test in regard to such matters, or

(2) they distort the truths of science in order to support their accepted false faiths.

“For a lover of truth both these positions are intolerable. In his own light he considers both these positions as false and hence abhors them.

“As all the various constituents of the love of truth had evolved in me, I had arrived at that stage of life where it was not possible for me to accept anything whether ancient or modern in matters religious, which could not stand the test of the canons of scientific method of investigation. I was anxious to accept all religious beliefs and matters not on the basis of mere faith but as pieces of true and verifiable knowledge quite in conformity with scientific test.

“As light and darkness are opposite things, so blind faith and true knowledge are mutually contradictory.....What man needs is true knowledge which should be eternal, and not blind faith which is born of the uncontrolled play of imagination and which spreads nets of falsehood to entangle mankind and thus squeeze life out of them.”

Then realising this extremely blessed state of his unique soul which had broken the bonds of all fictions, he wrote :—

“When I look upon the uniqueness and grandeur of this liberated state of my evolved soul, I feel myself indescribably blessed, deeply grateful, abundantly happy and immensely gratified.” (*Autobiography*, Vol. I, pages 280-282).

It is difficult for those souls who are ruled by one or many of the low-loves and low-hates to comprehend this unique state of soul-life. And so long as a soul does not receive Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique light and power, he is not able to perceive the reflection of that grand beauty on the mirror of his heart, and to such a soul the above expression of feelings would convey no adequate idea.

Unbound and free, controlled by the forces of complete love of truth and goodness, Bhagwan stepped into a new and altogether untrodden region of soul-life, to carry on all alone and unaided the most strenuous labours of investigations in that field. A lonely traveller, who is urged on by his masterful love of truth not to rest but to march on amidst dark clouds of despair and disappointment, oft-repeated shocks and dead walls, and not to lay down his spade till he had cut down all obstacles and reached the goal, is alone capable of describing his experiences of the crushing labours during his long journey and divine joy of a goal reached.

It shall be our most pleasant and profitable duty to convey, according to our insignificant powers, some idea of the great journey which Bhagwan Dev Atma undertook into these unexplored domains of thought and of his vast mental struggles bordering sometimes on desperation, and of the excessive relief and divine joy that suffused his unique soul when he captured the post he was out to conquer.

SEARCH FOR UNIVERSAL SYSTEM OF RELIGION.

It was in the year 1895 that Bhagwan Dev Atma threw himself heart and soul into the research work in the domain of soul-life. As man is part of the universe, and no correct knowledge of human soul can be possible without the true knowledge of the fundamental principles of the universe hence, the two subjects which engrossed Bhagwan Dev Atma's whole mind were:—

- (1) *Manush Tattva* (Human Philosophy).
- (2) *Vishva Tattva* (Philosophy of the Universe).

“I am first a man,” writes Bhagwan Dev Atma, “and then am I a part of the universe. Hence, the study of the philosophy of man was of primary and supreme importance to me. It does not avail me to know something about the universe, if I do not get true and correct knowledge about my own being. The Greek philosopher Socrates has said, ‘know thyself’. The English poet Pope once wrote that proper study of man, is man himself. Some one from amongst the *Rishis* of old also has said, ‘Soul-knowledge is the supreme knowledge.

“But in order to arrive at the true and complete knowledge of soul two conditions are indispensable, *viz.*: (1) inner capacity, (2) outside suitable conditions. The absence of one or both would make the attainment of this complete soul-knowledge absolutely impossible. As both these factors were non-existent before my manifestation, no man was able to discover that complete or universal system of religion for mankind which was ultimately revealed to me, by fulfilling the above two necessary conditions. The non-fulfilment of the above two conditions before my manifestation was due to the following four causes:—

(1) The soul-organism of man had not attained completion and therefore full and complete knowledge of soul was impossible.

(2) Since the soul-organism of man was incomplete, it was destitute of those various constituents of the love of truth which had appeared in my soul.

(3) As the soul-organism of man was incomplete, he was destitute of those various constituents of the love of goodness which had manifested in me.

(4) The science too was in its preliminary stage of growth and had not made that progress in various branches of human knowledge which it has done now. The great light of the law of “Evolution” had not dawned on the world.

The absence of these four causes not only made it impossible for man to attain to complete and necessary true knowledge of human soul, but the absence of this true knowledge deprived him of the true knowledge about *Dharma*. Hence, the world was completely void of the true knowledge of the universal Science-grounded system of religion for all mankind which I was instrumental in discovering and propagating in the world."

THE INITIAL STAGES OF ENQUIRY.

"Guided by national spirit, I started my investigation on the lines that had been laid down by Hindu sages. They had divided the human natures into three definite groups: (1) *Tamo Guni*, (2) *Rajo Guni*, and (3) *Sato Guni*. I also wanted to classify mankind on those lines. Hence, I made the following classification:—

(1) *Tamo Guni*. (2) *Rajo Guni*. (3) *Sato Guni*. (4) *Dev Guni*.

"I also drew on paper four paintings representing these groups. The first was completely dark and it represented hearts of *Tamo Guni* people. The second was light dark and that stood for *Rajo Guni* people. The third was partly black and partly white. This symbolised *Sato Guni* persons. The fourth was purely white. That represented *Dev Guni* soul.

"On the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the Dev Samaj held at Montgomery, I showed these paintings to the audience and delivered an extempore address explaining the various symbols that stood for various kinds of human natures. Besides several other minor differences which existed in my own and the ancient classification by old *rishis*, there were two great and fundamental points of contrast. The ancient sages had made only a three-fold division into *Tamo*, *Rajo* and *Sato Guni* temperaments. They had not seen nor had had any experience of *Devattva* which had manifested itself in me. That life of *Devattva* was the result of the evolution in my soul of the highest psychic forces or *Dev shakties*. Hence, my division was four-fold. I explained to the audience the significance of these four temperaments. Again, the ancient sages believed that every man possessed all these three natures. I did not believe it to be true.

"I wrote two articles dealing with the exposition and explanation of the various viewpoints on this four-fold classification. But a few days after that I discovered that this classification was utterly defective. It went some way but thereafter I found a dead wall before me. Hence, I had altogether to give up this line of investigation in my search after the goal."

Bhagwan then realised that in order to arrive at some definite and true solution of the problem—

(1) he should collect all facts relating to the organism of the body and soul of man ;

(2) he should critically examine the resemblances and differences existing in the body of the collected facts ;

(3) he should then, on some fundamental basis, classify them into groups ; and

(4) he should apply logical methods to discover some underlying truths or principles as based on those facts.

MENTAL STRUGGLES.

This was no easy task. How Bhagwan felt and what mental struggles he had to pass through, is very briefly described by him as under. He says :—

“ It was not difficult for me to get knowledge of the general principles pertaining to bodily organism of man from medical books, which contained the fruits of labours of good many research scholars in this domain. But so far as human soul is concerned, I felt myself at sea, for there had been no satisfactory investigation carried on into the regions of those truths and principles of soul-life which I was in search of and hence no knowledge of any satisfactory kind was obtainable anywhere on the face of this earth.

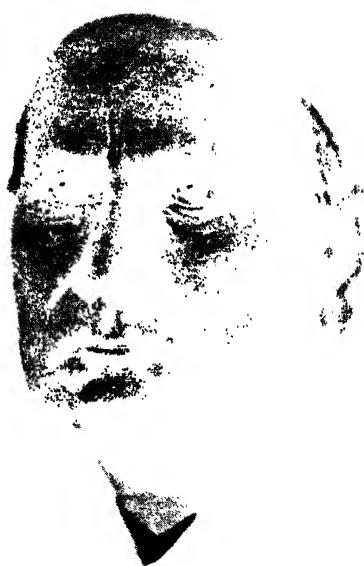
“ Hence as soon as I got into this great job, I felt my feet on an unreliable marshy ground. I began to realise that somebody had flung me into unknown waters wherein I did struggle very hard to reach the shore of safety but had no hope of any kind of success in my struggles. I felt vast sheets of waters encircling me. No land was at all in sight. On the one hand, my truth-loving heart would give me no rest of any kind, and on the other, I found that even after very hard and strenuous labours if I discovered something which I momentarily felt to be in sight, I soon realised that I was in the wrong and that all my labours were practically brought to nought and my hopes turned into dead sea fruit. But though disappointment after disappointment dogged my steps and I received repeated heart-shocks of disconcerting kind, I could not give up the quest. Why? Because the force of complete love for truth was imperious in my being. My position could be compared to one in deep slumbers who in that unconscious state had been carried into a dark, thick and tractless jungle and who on awakening was over-anxious to find a road leading to his house. Such a man wading his way through unknown and undiscovered jungle-growths would no doubt meet with many disappointments in finding any way out of it. But though cast into the abyss of despair over and over again, he would still persist in cutting his way to his house and would not rest till he had met with success. In the same way, though I had often to face the dark and ominous clouds of disappointment and despair in my search after the goal, I could not throw down my arms and sit with folded hands and do nothing. There was no way left for me but to continue on my ceaseless struggles. There seemed no end to my struggles. My path was extremely difficult and I had to face enormous obstacles and hardships. Sometimes I would heave a sigh of grief and exclaim, ‘ Alas ! for me ! How have I been caught up in the eddies of calamities and sufferings ! ’

"I was no doubt not a stranger to these calamities in this great task of investigation into truth. I had foreseen them the day I stepped into this field. But in the first stages of my journey, I was not so lonely and so friendless. I could count upon some helpers in those stages. But thereafter, I saw myself utterly alone and without any help or guidance. There was no other traveller on that path. The path of my quest was unique and the way that I had to tread was an unknown one. Thus as a lonely traveller I had to march on this lonely path.

"I am not the only seeker after truth with whom Nature had to play the part of stern mother. Such has been the way of Nature with all those who have ventured to tread the path of search after any truth. It made them pass through various kinds of calamitous circumstances, to suffer any amount of disappointments, till it made them truly humble, devotedly attached to itself and full of unshakable faith in its truth. It was only then that it parted with the treasure of its secret to them. In that case, I said to myself that I should not mind obeying the command of such an immutable law. When the mother Nature has brought about my manifestation for some grand purpose, I should not only willingly but gladly hew my way through difficulties. I was, therefore, ready to bear up all. But all this readiness could not change the fact that the killing difficulties were there. It is really an eternal fact of Nature that life is not made without struggles. Life does not evolve without passing through the fires of struggles. In order to help others to walk the way of evolution, it was but incumbent upon me to make all possible sacrifices to find it. It became indispensable for me to knock at the door of Nature not once but often, not for days and months but for years on end.

"The hours of night are fast passing away. The whole Nature is at rest nestling in the arms of mother sleep. Men and animals are lying in the lap of slumbers. But sleep visits me not. I enjoy no rest. My brain feels exhausted with the heavy strain laid on it to think out the solution of the problem before me. It is simply bursting with pain. I do want that my mind may stop all thinking but I feel helpless.

"But all these mental travails do not always prove fruitless. In fact, my daily struggles are so many links in the chain leading to the goal. As human child is ordinarily begotten after the mother has passed through most acute labour pains, in the same way every truth that I discovered made me pass through great amount of mental travail. I have, therefore, valued every new truth thousand times more than does a mother value her begotten child. But as nobody values wealth much, till he has acquired love for that and developed it with hard labour, in the same way, nobody can value truth as he ought to, unless he has himself been a lover of truth and has acquired some truth after passing through excessive struggles. Hence, every one of those truths pertaining to the philosophy of human soul, which I have discovered, is not one millionth



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part so dear to those whom I have made a gift of it, without any return, as it is to me. How painful is such an inappreciative attitude of those who are given this gift? What a mockish disrespect of truth by those who are wedded to falsehood and several superstitious beliefs."

PROBLEMS SET BEFORE BHAGWAN FOR SOLUTION.

Those great problems which Bhagwan Dev Atma set before himself for scientific enquiry in order to furnish true solution for them were the following :--

1. What is the fundamental nature of human soul?
2. What is the soul-organism of a common man?
3. How is soul related to body?
4. Who preserves, maintains, evolves and repairs the bodily organism of man?
5. What is the nature of change which a human soul undergoes under the ceaseless operation of the universal law of change?
6. How does human soul undergo changes in its organism?
7. What are the kinds of changes which human soul undergoes and what are their forms?
8. What is the result of higher evolution in human soul?
9. What is the result of degenerating changes in human soul?
10. What is the constitution of those human souls for whom progress is possible, and of those for whom higher evolution is impossible?
11. What are the consequences for those human souls who progress to some extent but then stop in their evolution?
12. What happens after human soul leaves this gross body?

"These great and several other minor problems," says Bhagwan, "possessed the deepest interest for me, which, led by my love of truth, I had to solve on the basis of the scientific canons of investigation. What a huge and intensive programme was thus placed before me by my inner forces to carry out? Is there any record of the life of any man who has set before himself such huge problems and who has shown such an anxiety to solve them purely on the basis of the scientific methods after renouncing all old cherished but false beliefs? To our knowledge none."

Bhagwan says further on :—

"No doubt this programme for my study and investigation was a rare one and it involved huge struggles. But I felt that Nature, which had manifested me endowed with the capacity to achieve my goal, was my one refuge and one protection. I had renounced all false beliefs and religious faiths of the ancient and modern systems. Hence I could get no guidance from them in my path. Again, I

had given up all blind faith as a fatal thing. I was simply over-anxious to have true and correct knowledge by means of the scientific method of investigation. Thus my position was this. I had abjured all old trodden paths. I had turned my back on them. I could not retreat. The path that I chose to tread was not a highway. I felt a dead wall raised before me. Hence, my troubles were tremendous. The ship of my life mission sailed in a sea which looked shoreless and which sighted no land anywhere. If any reader can conceive even a part of my struggles, he can by the stretch of his imagination form some idea of them. In those days, I had composed some hymns for myself, two of which I quote here :—

१—भजन

मेरे रक्षको होवो सहाय । [टेक]

आपत्काल के तुमहीं साथी, हाथ अपने तुम देवो बढ़ाय । १
संकट

देख असहाय अवस्था मेरी, मेरे दिल को दो ठहराय । २

मेरा आत्मा निर्भर चाहे, तुम मुझ को लो लपटाय । ३

२—भजन

मेरे रक्षको रक्षा करो । [टेक]

महा कठिन संग्राम में मेरे, नित २ बल से मुझ को भरो । १

परम एकता के लाने में, विघ्न और बाधा सब हि हरो । २

परमोत्तम जीवन व्रत मेरा, उस को तुम मिल पूरा करो । ३

ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

My protectors come and help me.

I feel you as friend in need, Stretch your hand of succour.

Looking to my helpless state, Come and prop up my heart.

My soul is in need of help, Come all and stand by me.

(2)

My protectors protect me.

In my huge struggles ; Come and inspire me with courage.

In evolving the goal of supreme harmony, Come and remove all obstacles and difficulties.

Supremely high is my life-vow, Come and co-operate with me to achieve it.

“The protectors whom I made an appeal to come and help me were those departed friends about whose continued existence in the next world, I had obtained incontrovertible evidence and who in fact were my true friends and sympathisers in my struggles.”

HELP FROM UNEXPECTED QUARTERS.

It has already been shown that it was not possible for Bhagwan Dev Atma to give up his quest, merely because it was altogether new and the path that he had to tread was never trodden before, and his journey, therefore, was a lonely one. The imperious force of the love of truth made it impossible for Bhagwan to live without plunging himself whole-heartedly into the vortex of mental struggles to get at the bottom of the great mystery that surrounded soul-life. It was but natural and inevitable that Bhagwan Dev Atma should have wrested secrets from the womb of mother Nature, and he did succeed in various ways. "But," says Bhagwan, "though light dawned on me in relation to some problems, yet the chief path or the goal was not in sight. Sidelight was thrown on some points here and there, but all that could not take me very far. I did get light on several points touching human soul and they were calculated to smooth my journey to the goal, but I felt that so long as I did not reach the destination, there could be no end to my struggles. My inward longings grew deeper and intenser, filling the atmosphere around me with their corresponding vibrations. Good wishes are a real force in Nature. They are in conformity with the law of evolution and are intended or meant to aid the fulfilment thereof and calculated to herald goodness. These good wishes must bear fruit. And it was inevitable that though I had to hew my way through thorns, thistle-woods and sharp and cutting stones of excessive mental struggles, yet I was ultimately to succeed (as my longings were full, intense and based on goodness). And this indeed turned out to be a fact. A way did open for me. A remarkable event happened and I was inspired with a sanguine hope of reaching the goal (of my search).

"Some of the departed souls who often times secretly helped me in one way or another and who were very anxious to find some means of communicating with me, got a golden opportunity of gratifying their earnest and deep desire. One of the girl members of my family developed to an extraordinary degree the faculty of mediumship. One of my *sewaks* who took some interest in this line brought a ring with a dark setting. On this dark side a drop of oil was put. Through the special powers of the medium the departed souls could cast reflection of their subtle body. This ring was given to the medium. She could see the reflection of their face inside it and recognise them. She could also hear their voices. She could also be possessed by the departed souls who spoke through her. Thus she turned out to be a very good medium in every way. I was apprised of all this. I tested the girl critically. I was convinced of her powers. I was already receiving the '*Harbinger of Light*' from Australia. This paper I had been regularly reading for some years past. I had also read some books, and was aware of the experiences of Crooks and Wallace, two eminent scientists on this problem of the existence of the departed souls. Hence, I personally took deep and living interest in this problem. I was then

inspired with a new hope to continue, by the help of the souls of the next world, to push further my investigation into the philosophy of human soul. This event took place in the month of October 1896."

UNCOMMON METHOD OF INVESTIGATION.

Continues Bhagwan :—

"I wanted to institute a rare kind of research work in the domain of the philosophy of human soul. It was a kind of investigation which had not attracted the attention of any investigator in any land. The psychical research carried on in Europe and America was directed only to the discovery of the fact, whether man lived after death of his gross body. On being convinced, on reliable evidence, that man did continue his existence on the next plane after throwing off his gross body on this earth, they jumped to the conclusion that their original belief that the soul was immortal was correct. They began propagating that belief. They could not discover the two fallacies involved in this unwarranted conclusion. They were also, according to their mental constitution (which they possessed in common with various other souls of similar kind), unfit to uncover these fallacies. These fundamental fallacies were these :—

1. *Logical fallacy*—It is not a sound conclusion to infer that because Ram lives for sixty years on this planet, and after his departure from here by death, he lives on some other plane, therefore, he is necessarily immortal. The immortality of any soul can never be inferred merely from the fact that because he lived for some years on this planet and then on leaving this gross body he continued his identical existence in a finer body on some other plane, therefore he is immortal. This is logically a fallacious inference.

2. *Lack of requisite knowledge*—Again, according to the process of the universal law of change every being must undergo some change. This change accruing according to the nature of cosmic conditions takes either the form of the evolution or progress of that being or its degeneration. Now those who are unconscious of the fact and nature of this universal law of change and the *necessary conditions* of the evolution and degeneration, and who, being oblivious to the value and importance of these 'necessary conditions' of change, jump to the conclusion that soul is inherently immortal and above this great law of change, fall into the marshy bogs of fallacious reasoning. Their inference, therefore, is completely unsound.

"Of the programme of twelve problems, that I had set before myself to solve, the first four related to the mutual relation of body and soul, while the remaining eight referred directly to the problem of the change and destiny of soul. Leaving the first four, I was deeply desirous of carrying on experimental investigation regarding the last eight problems and gain true and correct knowledge of them. I got no wa suitable opportunity for satisfying my longing and I forthwith

commenced my investigation. For several years I continued my work of investigation and these years of hard and strenuous research crowned my efforts with success. I cannot adequately thank all those departed higher souls who gave their most precious time to me and who spared no pains to help me in my great task. Their contribution to the cause of truth and goodness is indeed highly to be appreciated."

THE PSYCHIC CONDITION NEEDED FOR THE JOB.

Bhagwan Dev Atma further writes :—

"In order to discover truths pertaining to the problem of human soul-life, what is needed is not merely intellectual equipment, but more than that it is the higher life that is of supreme value. In absence of the highest psychic or divine forces no man can generate that unique light which alone can reveal higher truths. It was this unique light which was daily growing and developing in my soul. Now

- (1) the all-sided highest soul-life (*Dev Jiwan*),
- (2) the unique light generated by this unique soul-life,
- (3) complete love for the method of scientific investigation, and
- (4) the priceless knowledge of the universal processes of evolution and devolution working in Nature,

were the main and major factors which formed my whole equipment with which I started on the work of my laborious investigation. As these factors were unique, so was the nature of the investigation that I carried on, unique. It was not the kind of investigation which is carried on by the European and American savants who hold seances and who by direct conversation with the departed souls or by scientific method of enquiry try to arrive at the truth of the continuity of human life after the death of gross body. My investigation was carried on in the domain of the laws pertaining to the life of human soul on the basis of evolution and devolution as they exist in Nature. Hence, both as regards its nature and the principles, my investigation was quite distinct and of a unique character.

"In absence of the four factors above-mentioned, it was not possible for any soul in any land or clime to carry on his search after the principles pertaining to soul-life and to draw correct logical inferences therefrom. It is because of this lack that no person anywhere has discovered those profound principles touching and concerning human soul-life which I have discovered. It was because of the highest psychic forces which had evolved in my soul, that all those problems occurred to me which are described above and which could not occur to those devoid of those forces of the divine life, however learned they may otherwise have been. When the problems could not flash on their mind, it was absurd to expect from them to carry on search after them. So far as I am concerned, not only did

my own evolved heart suggest all those problems to me for solution, but I was urged to arrive at correct and true conclusions regarding them by means of the scientific method of investigation adopted by me and the knowledge I possessed regarding the laws of evolution and devolution. I got a wonderful touchstone which sifted truth from untruth and fact from fiction. Both these factors also were indispensable. As the knowledge of the law of gravitation and that of scientific method of higher mathematics have enabled astronomers to rightly investigate and arrive at true knowledge about the various questions regarding heavenly bodies, in the same way, besides the first two subjective factors the presence of last two also was essential to enable me to arrive at true and correct knowledge regarding the problems of human soul. Hence my long years of search and strenuous investigation met with success. I felt myself in true sense a *sidharth* (i.e., one who attains the goal) and I can hardly describe in words the state of blessedness I felt."

THE FOUR MOST FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's continuous and most strenuous labours in the field of the thorough-going and complete research on the lines of established scientific method of investigation, revealed to him four great principles relating to the Science-grounded system of religion. These four great principles gave to Bhagwan an unshakable foundation, for the one true universal system of religion for which great purpose the evolutionary process of Nature had brought about Bhagwan's manifestation. These four great principles as at first seen by Bhagwan were as under:—

PRINCIPLE OF CHANGE.

(1) Being subject to the universal law of change, man (both his body and soul) too, like millions of other existences in Nature, is liable to undergo change.

(2) The change for the better makes a soul nobler and more beautiful than before.

(3) The change for the worse results in the degeneration and ultimate extinction of a soul.

(4) The better or the higher change in soul is called its evolution and the worse or lower change is termed its devolution.

PRINCIPLE OF SOUL-ORGANISM.

(1) All the organised existences in the vegetable, animal and man worlds consist mainly of two parts—body organism and life-power which in man is called his soul.

(2) The life-powers of all organised existences when judged from the standpoint of their higher stages differ greatly from one another.

(3) It is the life-power in every vegetable, animal or human existence which builds the corresponding living body for its habita-

tion. This life-power maintains the body by assimilating food. It moves it and procreates other living forms corresponding to its own type.

(4) Every life-power in vegetable, animal or human organism, which is not able to build its body, or which loses the capacity of building a body for itself, becomes extinct. All those souls, therefore, who live low and base lives, gradually lose the constructive power of their soul and ultimately become extinct so far as their individuality is concerned.

PRINCIPLE OF RELATION.

(1) All the three living kingdoms—*i.e.*, vegetable, animal and human—owe their origin and existence to the inorganic world. All these kingdoms form so many interrelated organs of this vast machinery of the universe. Their relation to each other is extremely intimate and inseparable.

(2) By being devoid of the highest powers of soul which complete its organism, no person can establish all-sided evolutionary relation with all these four kingdoms. Hence the incompletely organised souls gradually degenerate, till they get annihilated altogether as separate entities.

(3) The *Dev Jiwan* (complete higher life) can never evolve in any soul by taking the refuge of, or worshipping any so-called one or many gods or any incompletely organised soul passing under the name of *rishi*, *muni*, *pir*, prophet, *mahatma*, *guru*, etc., or by cutting off all worldly connections or by practising *yoga* or *samadhi*, etc.

(4) It is only by acquiring true knowledge of the true life of the completely organised soul (or the *Dev Atma*) and by developing deep adoration or love for his beautiful ideal life that a fit soul is able to receive unique light (*Dev Joti*) which reveals the path of higher life and unique psychic power (*Dev Tej*) which is calculated to evolve higher forces in him. By getting this unique light and unique power he is enabled, on the one hand, to realise the ugliness of his lower courses of life in relation to various kingdoms of Nature and create a strong desire and capacity to get free from them, and, on the other, to develop higher or altruistic powers which enable him to establish higher harmonious relation with them.

PRINCIPLE OF TRUE GOAL.

(1) Salvation of man consists in getting freedom from the slavery to all dissolutionary courses of life in relation to the various kingdoms of Nature. The supreme goal of life consists in gradually getting such salvation and evolving higher forces of soul-life till one attains the *completion of soul-organism, establishing thereby the evolutionary harmonious relation with all the kingdoms of the universe.

*This idea of Bhagwan afterwards changed as will be seen later on.

(2) The supreme goal of life of soul does *not* consist in gaining the so-called paradise or acquiring wealth, name, position, power, sensual enjoyments in the next birth in the course of transmigration, or in attaining to the so-called felicity or *anand* and peace of mind or *shanti* by practising *yoga* or *samadhi* or in obtaining any true or illusive happiness, etc.

(3) Only that happiness is proper and desirable for man which he attains as a result of his getting freedom from soul-destroying forces and of evolving higher forces of higher life in himself. Every other form of happiness is neither proper nor desirable for man.

(4) Accepting happiness as a *Sumum Bonum* or supreme goal of life, man not only develops wrong courses of life and thereby harms his soul-life, but he brings about the gradual degeneration of his body and injury to his health also.

These were the four great principles which Bhagwan Dev Atma discovered and propagated in the world and which revolutionised the entire conception of religion and supreme goal of human soul. These four great principles demolished, utterly and for all times, all the so-called religious systems of the world which are either based on the fiction of one God or many gods or the fiction of transmigration of soul or any other similar fiction and which have led man adrift on the most illusive road leading to mirage of happiness as a goal and which have given him utterly absurd conception of the entity of soul, its salvation and its supreme goal, etc.

How grand then is the discovery of these universal principles ! How glorious is that community, race or nation which acquired the privilege of being blessed with that unique manifestation who discovered and taught to world these great principles ! How blessed should our whole planet feel which before the discovery of this universal system of religion, was steeped in the darkness of the fiction-grounded systems of religions which have led to human mass massacres and looting on mass scale, to bitterness in several sects and creeds and permanent hostility in groups of men ; but ultimately got illumined by the light of the Science-grounded religion !!!

It is true that in the present stage of its growth the fiction-wedded mankind is not able to appreciate the glory of the above unique principles based as they are on facts or realities of life. But as humanity comes out of this devitalising and dwarfing cobweb of fictions and acquires taste and anxiety for truth, it would feel truly and abundantly blessed and proud, for the fact that it at last got the true light which alone is calculated to lead, in course of time, to the higher harmonious relations of its various parts and thus give to the universal process of evolution its crowning glory.

BHAGWAN'S UNIQUE 'Tap' (SACRIFICES).

Sufferings and sacrifices in themselves have no value. They are glorious or inglorious according to the ideal in the service of which they are undergone by any man. A man who gambles away

all his wealth and faces great privations, mental agonies and heart shocks does not win any admiration for his sacrifices, because the object for which he made them was ignoble. The well-known traditional or legendary hero Raja Nal, who gambled away his whole sovereignty and who had to dissolve his home and abandon his good wife in a jungle uncared for, does not deserve to be applauded for his sufferings. But his great wife has been afforded a high place in the niche of the galaxy of great Indian women because she underwent sacrifices in order to remain loyal, faithful and absolutely true even to her gambler lord. There are millions in the world who undergo untold sufferings to get livelihood for themselves and their families. But nobody falls into raptures singing hallelujahs for them. Of course, if any of them displays uncommon spirit of integrity and probity in his dealings and suffers in consequence thereof, he is rightly applauded. A murderer, who is sent to gallows and who dies as a result of his evil act, gets utmost condemnation even though he lays down his very life. This is because the object for which he laid down his life was base and sinful.

There are some blessed children of man who have dedicated all their powers and possessions and even risked their lives in some philanthropic object. The liberators of slaves, the emancipators of women, the founders of the homes for the waifs, etc., have won a cosy corner in the deep recess of human heart, because their sacrifices were for a noble cause. It is, therefore, the noble goal which glorifies the sacrifices and not the sacrifices which lend splendour to any base object. Those so-called *sadhus* who give up all duties and responsibilities and take to forest nooks or mountain caves to pass away all their lives in the supremely selfish goal of quest for their personal happiness are being uniformly denounced by all those who hate selfishness as a goal.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's sacrifices in the pursuit of his life-vow are unique because the goal was unique. The thirtieth chapter of Bhagwan's *Hindi Autobiography* Vol. I deals with this unique *Tap* of Bhagwan and it would profit us great if we freely translate here Bhagwan's version of it as written by himself :—

"There was a time when this planet was inhabited by millions of animals but there was no trace of man at all. Gradually in the course of evolution man appeared from a branch of the mammalian stock. This new being by the gradual unfoldment of the progressive powers of intellect and language brought about a unique revolution on this planet. His species multiplied and increased to millions of individuals. But though crores of men walked on the planet, the Dev Atma (or the soul possessed of the complete and all-sided love for truth and goodness, and complete and all-sided hatred for all that was antagonistic to truth and goodness) was absent. But as the evolution of man from the animal world was inevitable, in the same way, it was inevitable that in the interests of higher evolution of man, Dev Atma's manifestation

should take place. The unique highest psychic forces which by their evolution developed my soul into Dev Atma, compelled me to take up a life-vow which was simply unparalleled. And as my life-vow was unique, so were the sufferings and sacrifices or *Tap*, that I was able to undergo, unique in Nature. As man can very rightfully claim that before his advent on this earth no species in the entire animal world possessed those forces of progressive intellect and speech with which he was blessed by Nature, in the same way, I can also rightfully declare that before my advent, no soul appeared on this planet equipped with those highest psychic forces which manifested in my soul. Not to speak of the ordinary man, even among the most cultured men or the distinguished founders of various sects, not a single one could be found who declared :—

‘The beautiful truth and goodness,

My foremost aim represent’ ;

i.e., who said that it was his supreme goal of life to evolve the highest psychic forces, and who having thus evolved them in his soul should have said :—

‘And in the service of the world,

May my life be fully spent’ .

i.e., who thus made it the supreme vow of his life to subscribe his all in the service of the entire world, as I did at the prime age of thirty-two.

“Again it was and is impossible for all the ancient or modern founders or propagandists of various religious denominations to accept the all-sided truth as the supreme goal of their life, as all of them

(1) have given the most prominent place to imagination and blind faith, and

(2) have been destitute of various constituents of the complete soul-organism. And all of them could not, nor can they now, wage a crusade against all forms of fiction or untruth and in this two-fold mission of upholding, at every moment of their lives, the cause of complete love of truth and waging warfare against all forms of untruth, undergo all kinds of sacrifices and trials and tribulations or *Tap*.

“In fact the founders of various religious denominations had developed only that kind of psychic make-up which limited the reach of their knowledge only to the extent that they could declare

(i) that every man suffers in this world lot of misery and pain and it is against his nature to bear up all that, and

(ii) that to get salvation from misery and to attain to supreme felicity is in conformity with his heart’s longing and, therefore, it constitutes his supreme goal.

"They considered religion to be nothing but a name for the method or methods by which man could accomplish this goal of his life. Go and read well the life of Mahatma Buddha and ask yourself, why it was that at the age of twenty-nine he abandoned his good wife, new born babe, and the royal mansion and took to jungle? You will find that Mahatma Buddha renounced all to find out the causes of human pain and misery and the way to counteract them. He entered the Urvilla forest near Magadha and joined the society of *sannyasis* who taught him that by undergoing bodily privations through fasts and by engaging himself in contemplation, man could get free from all the worldly miseries and pains. He engaged himself in these exercises and reduced his food practically to the starvation point. He also engaged himself in deepest contemplation. And what did he gain thereby? His body was reduced to a skeleton and his weakness grew so great that once while returning from walk, and engaged in absorbing contemplation, he suddenly swooned away. When he recovered consciousness, he came to the conclusion that it was a blunder to have had recourse to a life of starvation and to have suffered bodily privations. Contemplation was essential for knowledge and not the emaciation of body. From that time he began the proper nourishment of his body and gave up the false *Tap* of fasting. After years of contemplation he discovered four things:—

1. That life is full of misery.
2. That lower desires are the root causes of misery.
3. That in order to escape pain and misery, it is indispensable for man to destroy his desires or keep himself safe from their poisonous influences, as the gratification of these lower desires brought man again and again into the entanglements of transmigration.
4. That various exercises were essential to get free from the bondage of lower desires.

"It is said that by the knowledge of these four principles he not only became 'Buddha' but he became all-seeing and all-knowing. He saw at a glance all those various births which he had taken in the long continuous past in obedience to the law of *karma*.

"The net result of all his enlightenment or Buddhahood was that he made it a supreme goal of his life to seek out all the methods to get free from the worldly miseries and to attain to complete freedom from the cycles of births and deaths. *It was not at all the goal of his life to evolve in his soul all the various constituents of the love of truth to generate unique light in his soul, and to get knowledge of the universal process of evolution and devolution and thereby propagate the one true universal system of religion for all mankind.* Hence though he is considered 'Buddha' or the enlightened one, he could not get even the light to shake off the false idea of the transmigration of soul and to acquire and propagate the knowledge of the evolution and devolution of soul-life. Even before the advent of Buddha, millions cherished the false theory of the transmigration of soul. He accepted this superstitious belief. He was not only unable to shake

off the grip of this false belief but, on the contrary he confirmed it by declaring that he was able to see all the numerous births and deaths, he had passed through in the long continuous past. Being destitute of the various highest psychic forces of the love of truth, it was but natural for the various founders of religious faiths not only to accept several false beliefs but to manufacture and propagate false, and, in several cases totally impossible, stories to meet their requirements. Even Mahatma Buddha was not free from this weakness.

“The most authoritative religious scripture of the Buddhists is called त्रिपिटक *Tripithak*. This is written in Pali language which was a derelict of Sanskrit and was the spoken language in Buddha's lifetime. This book is divided into three parts...Every part consists of several volumes. One of the books included in the second part of that authoritative scripture is called *Jatak*. It is related that when Mahatma Buddha became omniscient, he became conscious of all his 550 births which he had passed through and described them all and these were recorded in *Jatak*. According to his own version Mahatma Buddha was once born as a Brahman named Sumedh सुमेध. That time he had along with thousands of gods and human beings the ocular vision of a Buddha named *Dapinkar*. This Buddha prophesied his becoming in some future time himself a Buddha. As soon as the prophecy was uttered all those miraculous phenomena occurred on the earth and in the heavens which appear on anyone's becoming the Buddha. All these alleged phenomena are false to the very core and being opposed to the law of Nature are impossible of occurrence. And as Bible and Puranas are full of false beliefs and tales originating from the so-called omniscient God or the so-called all-knowing *rishis*, in the same way *Jatak* also is full of hundreds of untrue tales given by Mahatma Buddha.

“From Colombo a paper is issued called the *Buddhist*. This paper contained in one of its issues a story to the effect that once a young Brahman named Shubha approached Mahatma Buddha and asked him, why it is that one man is born rich and another poor, one is long-lived and another short-lived, one is healthy and another is diseased? In reply to all these queries Mahatma Buddha said :—

(1) ‘A man who gives food, clothing, water, etc., to Buddhist missionaries gets rich by such acts, while one who does not give them these things becomes poor.’

“Now this is merely a fancy. Is it not true that there are thousands of people in India and elsewhere who are wealthy and who give nothing—no food, water or clothing—to the Buddhist missionaries? Nay, there are people who are rich even though they do not give anything in charity to anybody. There are again those who give alms according to their means to *sadhus*, etc., and yet they do not get rich. Besides this, is the acquisition of wealth, the true reward for leading virtuous or charitable life? Decidedly not.

"Proceeding further, the same paper writes :—

(2) 'If a man is cruel and slaughters animals, he becomes short-lived, but he who does not kill animals, does not handle *lathi* or sword and is full of mercy and shows kindness to all sentient beings attains to long life.'

This again is another fib. Is it not true that there are cases of individuals who live long even though they are meat-eaters, hunters of animals and fowls and thus grow callous-hearted, while those who are strict vegetarians and possess the milk of human sympathy, pass away at premature age?

"The paper again writes :—

(3) 'If any one injures sentient beings by striking them with hand, stone, *lathi* or sword, he becomes a prey to several bodily maladies, while he who refrains from such acts enjoys perfect health and strength.'

"This also is wholly untrue. There are hundreds of men who injure nobody with hand, stone, *lathi* or sword and yet are a prey to several physical ailments.

"Similarly Mahatma Buddha attributed all the untrue stories prevalent at the time regarding the transmigration of soul to his own person.

"Same was the case with Jain Tirthankers too. They also believed in the false theory of transmigration of soul and taught the supreme goal of life to consist in getting freedom from the pains and miseries of this as well as the next world and in attaining to felicity or peace of mind by *yoga samadhi*. Brahmvadi Shanker and Gorakh, etc., other *yogies* also taught the same goal. Even the ancient founders of faiths like Moses, Jesus, Mohamed, Ramanuj, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Dadu, etc., and the modern founders, *viz.*, Ram Mohan, Keshab, Rama Krishna, etc., whether they believed in an embodied or bodiless God, were a prey to various false beliefs, and taught the supreme ideal of man to consist either in getting freedom from the wrath of the so-called God or the pains of the so-called hell founded by Him in the next world; or in getting free, through pardon, etc., from some other kind of punishment consequent on the violation of certain so-called God's commandments; or in attaining to some joy in one or other so-called imaginary heavens or realising felicity of mind by love of or union with the so-called God, etc. The founder of the Arya Samaj not only considered it his duty to propagate one or other false belief current in this country, but accepted the popular theory of transmigration of soul and taught the supreme goal of life of man to consist in getting free from the painful entanglements of births and deaths and attaining to happiness here and in the next world.

"The fact is that all these persons could not go beyond their own psychic limitations. The powers they possessed and disabilities they laboured under could not carry them further than what they believed and taught.

“Hence,” says Bhagwan, “My supreme object was absolutely different from theirs and of a unique character.

“Again *Tap* is described to mean the undergoing of the prescribed pain-producing exercises. It is said about *Tap* :—

‘तपोमिः प्राप्यतेऽभीष्टं नोसाध्य हि तपस्यतः ।’

Translation.—Every object is realised by *Tap*. Nothing is impossible of attainment through *Tap*.

“Again it is also said :—

‘तपसा लभ्यते सर्व्व ।’

Translation.—Everything is attained by means of *Tap*.

“It is true that if any object is not impossible of realisation, one is bound to realise it, if he possesses deep and abiding love for it and capacity to undergo all kinds of *Tap*, i.e., sufferings and renunciations necessary to attain it. As my supreme goal was completely unique and different from the supreme goal of the above mentioned ‘*Mahatmas*,’ in the same way, my *Tap* for it was also quite unique and quite distinguishable from that of theirs.

“If it is possible for anybody to bring before his mind the picture of

- (1) the various kinds of most agonising heart-shocks and pains that I had had to suffer continuously for years ;
- (2) the renunciations of bodily health, money, honour, name, friendship, family and *samajic* connections that I had had to make ;
- (3) the most difficult work of study and contemplation that I had to perform amidst the depressing atmosphere of family circle and that of other people by whom I was day and night surrounded, but from the lower influences of which I ever remained above, and the extent and the variety of the mental struggles through which I had to pass in doing the tremendous work of writing and lecturing ;
- (4) the utmost struggles that I had to go through in order not only to keep myself free from all kinds of untruth and wrong in my relation with every kingdom of Nature, but also by remaining engaged in the good of every kingdom by instituting search after truth in pursuit thereof,

in order to realise my supreme ideal or goal, he will be able in a measure to imagine the uniqueness of my *Tap*.”

(*Ibid*, Chap. 30).

II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRUE RELIGION.

The religions that are prevalent in the world are many and various. Being based on various fictions they are not only different from one another but are, in many ways, mutually contradictory. Since they represent either the whims or fancies of the so-called God in His so-called revealed books, or personal wishes and idiosyncrasies of some founders, they could not be universal in their nature. Bhagwan Dev Atma blessed this creed-ridden world with the one true universal system of religion based on the verifiable and provable facts and laws of Nature. Let us freely translate Bhagwan Dev Atma's own blessed words explaining the philosophy of the true religion, he gave to the world after he had discovered the four great truths. Writes Bhagwan in Chapter xxxi of his *Autobiography*, Vol. I :—

“I cannot adequately describe how blessed and fortunate I felt when I became *sidharth*. The glory of the four great truths or principles relating to the scientific basis of religion which I had discovered, and which opened to me the path of true religion and showed its foremost and imperative necessity for all mankind, cannot be sufficiently sung. In place of all the various fiction-grounded and mutually different philosophies of the world religions, the humanity now got one true and science-grounded philosophy of true religion. Now religion ceased to remain the matter of gossip or fiction by different people but it became an object of one universal philosophy for all mankind. What is meant by true religion? The reply to this query on the scientific basis could now be only the following :—

The true religion consists on the one hand in man's getting *freedom* from all those *lower courses* of life in relation to various kingdoms of Nature of which he is a part to which baser courses of life he becomes a slave by his (1) ignorance, (2) various lower desires, (3) lower passions, and (4) lower egoistic loves, and in consequence whereof, besides proving harmful to them, he vitiates the form and vitality of his own soul-life and walks the path of his annihilation; and, on the other, in *evolving* those higher forces of heart which build the vitality and beauty of his soul-life, enable him to establish his relation of supreme harmony with various kingdoms of the universe and develop in him the most glorious higher life.

“The organism of soul-life has become complete by the evolution in Dev Atma of all-sided highest psychic forces of true higher life and it is the higher or divine influences of these highest soul powers that can carry man beyond the reach of all destructive forces. This is called *Dev Jiwan* and this is termed *Dev Dharm*.

“The *Dev Dharm* or *Dev Jiwan* is attained by the evolution of the various forces of the complete love of truth and Gcodness and

various forces of the complete repulsion for untruth and wrong. Having attained to this complete life or *Dev Jiwan*, the Dev Atma by imparting the higher influences of his highest psychic forces, produces, as far as possible, higher changes in various kingdoms of the universe, and arrests and stops the course of lower or destructive change in them and thus he himself in his own turn grows higher. Having established higher evolutionary relationship with the various kingdoms of the universe he becomes helpful and serviceable to the cause of evolution and in his turn he is protected and safeguarded by every evolutionary part of Nature. What a holy alliance or harmony between the two !”

This was the grand and most profound philosophy of soul-life or true religion which Bhagwan conferred on this world.

SCIENCE-GROUNDED CREED.

It was in the year 1899 or thereabout that Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote a book on the science-grounded and fiction-grounded faiths. It was published in the year 1900. In the first chapter of that book Bhagwan dealt with what is meant by science-grounded religion, and in another he dealt with the nature and teachings of fiction-grounded faiths. As the viewpoint from which this subject was dealt with was absolutely new and as Bhagwan's new philosophy was also explained, this book possessed a certain amount of uniqueness. It also contained two more chapters dealing with the “slavery to low-loves and low-hates” and the “two great impediments in the way of man in gaining knowledge of the true philosophy of true religion.”

We give a free translation here of the first chapter of that book which deals with the science-grounded religion :—

“What is called science in English language is known as *Vigyan* in Sanskrit. All that knowledge is termed “science” which is obtained through experimental investigation of various departments of Nature, keeping facts of Nature as supreme. On the basis of this knowledge only such of the principles or laws are worthy of acceptance which man has discovered about the ways of working of Nature, and which are eternal and of universal application.

Nature is one, but sciences are many. All the truths of various sciences, being based upon facts of cosmos, as is but natural, are not only not contradictory to one another but they corroborate one another.

Science has made great strides on the ladder of progress on the one hand, because of the increasing number of capable scientists and, on the other hand, because of the discovery of the fundamental principles necessary for the successful carrying on of true scientific investigation. This great progress has at last manifested those world-wide, universal and eternal laws, which go by the name of *Vikas* and *Vinash* (i.e., Evolution and Devolution in Nature).

"These two universal processes or laws of Nature are the fruits of centuries of investigation carried on in the various domains of Nature by various scientists. These two great principles are now accepted with respect by all scientific minds who enthusiastically sing to their glory.

"A question may be asked why it is that science has won such a glory? This is because science has paid homage to truth and not to falsehood. While truth is one, fictions can be many. This is because imaginations indulged in by different people differ. It is due to this fact that fiction-grounded faiths, based, as they are, on uncontrolled imagination, are not only different but in many cases they are contradictory in their teachings and possess no universal scientific basis.

"The progress in true knowledge made by science in various departments of Nature produced a consternation in the camps of the propagandists of various false religious faiths. So long science had not made sufficient progress, these advocates of false faiths carried on their false propaganda by maligning science, expressing contempt for it and even using *argumentum ad hominem* and in some cases even *argumentum ad baculum*. They found their teeth set on edge against the discoveries of science as they militated against their false and fiction-grounded beliefs. They laid absolutely false and defamatory accusations against the advocates of scientific truths. But all this conduct of the believers in false religions could not stem the powerful tide of the progress of science. However, when science made still greater progress these friends of false faiths were obliged to give up their vocation of abusing science. And when science reached its high water mark in its inevitable progress, they could not help singing present praises of science. But this changed attitude did not affect their utterly blind faiths in their religions, and their beliefs remained as before, wrong and fiction-grounded. When the glory of science spread to all the four corners of the world, some believers in fiction-grounded faiths changed their front in so far that they began to say, on grounds absolutely unsound and irrelevant, that their faiths were not opposed to science but they were consistent with its principles. *They however lost sight of a great fact that no religion could be in conformity with science which was not based upon the accepted universal processes of Nature but was based on one or other fiction.*

"Any person who becomes cognisant of the reality and eternity of the universal laws of evolution and devolution in Nature, would at once see that, in common with all other existences in Nature, his whole being (*i.e.*, both body and soul) cannot but be subject to them. Such a man would not be indifferent to the fact of the operation of these processes on his soul. Not only would the man who realises the truth of these universal laws operating on his being, not grow indifferent to them, but he would, in their light, also see the most patent and obvious fact that all religious systems which have ignored these great laws have given teachings about human soul which are fiction-grounded and false.

"*Knowledge of these universal laws of evolution and devolution and the light shed on the nature and organism of soul-life lands a man in a new and wonderful world.* He then realises directly that before he got this light, he was spiritually blind and was groping in the darkness about soul. Though otherwise learned, wealthy and enlightened, he would feel that so far as the true light regarding the evolution and devolution of the life of soul was concerned, he was a perfectly ignorant man and was plunged in a whirlpool of errors. He would also realise that many of his beliefs based on his old religious creed were not only utterly false but in many cases most harmful. He would also realise that as a patient is bound to aggravate his malady if he takes a wrong medicine even with the best of intentions, similarly he had harmed his own soul greatly by living and leading his life in the abysmal pit of false and fiction-grounded beliefs.

"He would further realise that the very basis of all the so-called prevalent world-religions being false and imaginary, the true religion would be only that system of religion which is based on the foundation of these universal processes of evolution and devolution.

"Again when the knowledge of those two universal processes of evolution and devolution is very faithfully applied to the life and death of soul, this philosophy about them alone would be called true philosophy of true religion. The discoverer and teacher of this glorious knowledge can alone be called the one true teacher of the true religion. This teacher has given to the world that true basis of religion and that true philosophy of soul-life which are new to the world and which alone can be called *Vigyan Mulak* or based on science in true sense. These teachings produce a complete revolution in the world of religion and thereby a new era of thought dawns on the world. When a soul acquires the light of this new and true religion, he is able to distinguish it from all fiction-grounded religions and realises that the teachings of this science-grounded religion open a new world of great many blessings and infinite good which had been a sealed book to him so far.

"The entire being of man consists of his body and his life-power. Without life-power neither is his body brought into being nor is its very existence sustained. It is this life-power in man which is called soul. This soul is the most essential part in man because he cannot exist without it, nor can he enjoy any happiness without it. Hence any one who is devoid of this true knowledge of the life of soul deserves to be pitied—be he a Raja or Rani, King or Prince, Nawab or Begum, Master or servant, Punjabi or Hindustani, Indian or European, etc., etc.

"*There is no knowledge higher than the knowledge of soul.* A man who is ignorant of this is utterly blind and unconscious even though he may be otherwise learned in various other departments of knowledge. It is a pity, thousand times a pity, that millions of

people who inhabit this earth are utterly blind so far as the knowledge of their own soul is concerned, though they possess in most cases just a smattering knowledge of their bodies. They do not know what the nature of soul or its life is. They are altogether insensitive as to what constitutes *Jiwan Vidya* (knowledge of the life or soul) or who *Jiwan Data* (life-giver of soul) is?

"It is not the illiterate or those that believe in one or other religious creed who are devoid of this light, but look where you please, you will see all around you and among all classes of people the prevalence of this most dreadful and harmful unconsciousness towards the highest problem of their soul-life.

"Being enlightened by the unique light of the true *Dharma* based on science, it is not difficult for any fit soul to find out the fictitious nature of the various fiction-grounded or false faiths, because he is able clearly to apprehend the fact, that, *if the teachings of any system of religion or religious faith have no relation to the salvation of soul from its lower courses of life (i.e., low-loves and low-hates—Ed.) and the evolution of higher or altruistic forces in it but are in fact helpful to him in degenerating his soul-life and prove a hindrance in its higher evolution, all such teachings are absolutely fiction-grounded and harmful.*

"This Science-Grounded Religion is none another than the *Dev Dharm* which has revealed itself in Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique soul. Bhagwan on the one hand shows every fit soul, by imparting to it his unique light, the correct and true path of life, and, on the other, by imparting his unique power produces and develops in it the higher consciousnesses which are necessary to liberate him from the lower courses and to evolve him in higher life. By means of imparting the influences of his such unique light and unique power he rescues men from the abysmal depths of base life and leads them on to climb the ladder of higher life. He further reveals to them the true and supreme ideal of their life which is and remains otherwise a sealed book to all men even though they may be learned or cultured, and opens wide for every fit soul the treasure of all those blessings of good life (or *hit*) compared with which even the sovereignty of the whole earth pales into insignificance."

IMAGINATION-BEGOTTEN RELIGIOUS CREEDS.

Bhagwan Dev Atma published some articles in the columns of *Jiwan Path*—a Hindi organ of Dev Samaj—in the months of Bhadun Sambat 1959 and Vaisakh 1960 B, on imagination and the imagination-begotten creeds. Some portions of these articles after necessary corrections were published in Chapter XXXIV of the first volume of the *Autobiography of Bhagwan Dev Atma*. We translate that chapter not literally but just freely to give to our readers an idea of what Bhagwan believed to be fiction-grounded faith and why. In the light of this the last article would be apprehended more fully:—

Q.—What is meant by imagination ?

A.—Among various mental faculties or powers which man possesses there is one which is called imagination. By means of this faculty man creates lots of fancies. All those stories of fairies and demons which delight little children and all those false legendary or fictitious tales which are believed by man in general, are all of them the creation of imagination. You may have heard the story of Sheikh Chilli. It runs like this :—

A coolie was standing in a bazaar. His name was Sheikh Chilli. A man asked him if he would carry a jar of ghee to his house. He agreed to take it for one anna. He put the jar on his head. He fell into a reverie. He imagined as having made many bargains exchanging the thing which he purchased for his one anna for another and that one for another and so on till he imagined that he grew very wealthy. Then he fancied himself to have been wedded to a rich man's daughter. He fancied that he begot two or three children. He dreamt in his day dream that his eldest child came to him and said, "Papa! Please come home. Mother wants you. The meals are ready." Sheikh Chilli felt offended at this interference by his child saying. "Get away unlucky boy, I am not coming." At this he shook his head to suit the sense of his words. At this movement the jar of ghee fell down with a crash and was broken to pieces. The owner of the ghee simply got furious. He called him names and dealt two or three boxes on his ears. The poor broken hearted fellow repeatedly said, "Sir, you have lost ghee worth two rupees only but I have lost my whole family."

Now you follow what imagination is and how man builds castles in the air by its magic wand.

Q.—Can you cite instances of the work of these flights of imagination as prevailing in the domain of the so-called religion ?

A.—Yes, as many as you please. The prevalent religions are so full of innumerable stories—all fictitious—that it is simply impossible to enumerate them all. Leaving over details, if we confine ourselves to the fundamentals of these so-called religions of the world, we shall find how all of them are imagination-ridden. These are as under :—

1. False and fictitious beliefs relating to the creation or coming into being of the universe.
2. False and fictitious beliefs relating to worshipful beings.
3. False and fictitious beliefs relating to religious scriptures.
4. False and fictitious beliefs relating to the salvation of soul.
5. False and fictitious beliefs relating to good and bad deeds.
6. False and fictitious beliefs relating to worship and prayer.
7. False and fictitious beliefs relating to the nature of soul.
8. False and fictitious beliefs relating to life after death.

9. False and fictitious beliefs relating to the so-called heavens and hells.
10. False and fictitious beliefs relating to the supreme goal of man's life.

So on and so forth.

Q. Can you please, give me some details of these creations of fancy?

A.—By all means. *Manu Sanghita* which is considered to be the oldest scripture among *Simritis* contains the following imaginary story of the coming into being of the universe :—

God first created water. He dropped a seed of his power on its surface. This turned into a golden egg. Hatching this egg came out a person named Brahma. From one half of the egg-shell he formed paradise and from the other half he formed this earth. Brahma begot a son named Verat and Verat in turn begot Manu. Brahma produced all gods like Indra, etc., and three Vedas. One day of Brahma is equal to crores of years of our time. Night too is equally long. This universe of ours is created and exists for one such day of Brahma. For night (when Brahma goes to sleep) this universe is annihilated.

This is one kind of imaginary story. Now listen to another, which has been written by Swami Dayanand of the Arya Samaj in the very first edition of his book, *Sattiyarth Prakash*. He asserts all this on authority of the Vedic scriptures.

"It is known by means of the *Shrutis* of Vedas, etc., that in the beginning there existed only one God. There was not even a trace of the universe. He wished to produce various kinds of creatures and in an instant all varieties of objects came into existence. This means that God did not form the world out of any separately existing material, but everything was created from his own inherent power."

The same Swami Dayanand writes the following story of the creation of the universe on the authority of the same Vedic scriptures in the second edition of his *Sattiyarth Prakash* which is quite different from the first :—

Like God himself, the universal matter and soul are also eternal. The God, soul and matter are without beginning. They are eternal and are the causes of all existences and in their own nature they are uncaused. After coming into being, the universe gets destroyed and after destruction it again comes into being. God creates ego out of the subtlest principles, and out of ego he generates five subtle elements and then out of these, he produces five gross elements. Out of these gross elements are produced medicinal herbs (औषधियाँ) and out of the herbs is produced the seed or semen and out of seed is produced body.

In the beginning of things, God created thousands of young men and women in the country of Tibet. These young persons by

mating produced mankind. This time the earth has been in existence for over one hundred and ninety-six crores of years.

Now just look at these stories and see what contradictory statements they contain. According to Manu himself, he was grandson of Brahma though he had neither a mother nor a grandmother. Brahma was again produced out of an egg and this egg came into being as a result of the seed of God thrown on the waters he had produced. What a flight of fancy! But these are very ancient fictions. Pt. Dayanand gives in our own time first one story of the creation in the first edition of his book and then another in the second edition—both being based on God's Vedic revelation. In the first story he says, God alone existed in the beginning of the things. There was neither any soul, nor matter in any form in the beginning. But in the second story he says (on the basis of the same God's teachings) that in the beginning not only God existed but matter and soul also existed simultaneously. How mutually contradictory these stories are? Again how fanciful is the story of the birth of five elements, one of which is said to be *heat* which is a force and not an element. Again the scientists have discovered the number of elements to be more than seventy (now ninety-seven). To imagine that there are only five elements is simply a play of uncontrolled imagination. Still more daring is the fancy or fiction of giving the exact age of the universe.

Let us now relate some of the false and fictitious tales written in the Mohamedan and the Christian scriptures. The *Hadis* of Musalmans contains a story that in the beginning of things God created a tree. On the tree he placed a peacock personating *Nur Mohamedi i.e.*, light of Mohamed. This peacock engaged itself in deep prayers for seventy thousand years. God then looked at the peacock and it perspired through nervous shyness. From the perspiration of the head of this peacock were formed angels, from the perspiration of its chest came into being *Nabies* and Prophets, and from the perspiration of its eyebrows were produced souls of the Musalmans. From the perspiration of its ears were produced the souls of Christians and Jews. From the perspiration of its back were produced the lands of Mecca, Medina and the earth clay for all Musalmans' mosques. From the perspiration of its feet were formed the rest of the created things on this earth. How strange are these fancies!!

Again it is written that God created Adam out of the clay of many lands. Somewhere again it is recorded that his head was made out of the clay of Mecca, his chest out of the dust of the world, his back and feet out of the clay of India, both hands out of the clay of the East and both feet out of the clay of the West. Somewhere it is again written that his head was formed out of the dust of Jerusalem, his face out of the dust of paradise, heart out of the dust of *Ferdos* and his tongue out of the dust of the women of paradise. Then God ordered the soul to enter the head or mouth of this body made out of the various clays. This soul hovered round

the body for two hundred years. Thereafter it first settled in its eyes and then in its ears. Then it gradually pervaded the whole body. This converted the clay into flesh and bones. Thus was Adam created. This Adam then was seated on the throne and carried for a century round the paradise seeing its sights. Then a horse of musk was made for his riding. He rode it. The angels walked in its front and took him for a round all over the skies.

What terrible fictions !

It is further said that once when Adam was sleeping, God took out one of his left ribs and made a woman out of it. This woman was wedded to Adam by God when he woke up. Both then were allowed to live in the paradise. God then told both that they were at liberty to taste the fruits of all plants but one. It is said that the excepted plant was that of wheat.

But both Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan to eat the fruit of that plant, at which God, getting angry, turned both of them out of the paradise. He punished the woman by cursing her that she would beget children and suffer travails. And Adam's punishment was that he would earn his livelihood by the sweat of his brow. Both of them descended to earth and began to live by cultivation. They were always blessed with twins—one male and the other female. Then both these twins were joined in wedlock by God's behests. Thus from the generations of the children of these pairs this earth was peopled and became full. Adam died at the age of nine hundred and thirty.

Do not such fancies beat the story of Sheikh Chilli ?

Now let us take the fables of Christians. Their scripture is called the Bible. It is divided into two parts. One is called the Old Testament and the other the New Testament. In the Old Testament the story of creation is given as under :—

In the beginning of things, God made heavens and earth. Then He produced light, and water, and afterwards the sun, the moon stars, etc. He created the body of Adam out of the dust of this earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. A garden was created towards the North of Aden where Adam began to live. God then made him sleep and cut out one of his ribs and made a woman out of it. God planted two trees in that garden, one of life and the other of knowledge of good and evil. He then called Adam and Eve and emphatically instructed them that they could eat the fruits of all other trees save of those two. He told them that they would die if they ate the fruits of the forbidden two trees. But a serpent who was in fact a great angel, came and tempted Eve to taste of the forbidden fruit saying that she would not only ~~not~~ die but she would rise to the position of God himself in the knowledge of what is good and what is evil. Eve then plucked fruits of the forbidden trees and ate them herself and made her husband also eat them. God grew angry with them and he cursed Adam that he would earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and cursed Eve that she would conceive and have

children and thus suffer travails of delivery and confinement. He cursed the serpent that it would always crawl and eat of the earth and there would spring up eternal enmity between it and man. It would run to sting man and man would rush to kill it.

Then Adam's wife brought forth a son and he was named Cain. There was also a brother to him named Abel. God grew angry with Cain who fled from his home and went and married somewhere a woman. A son named Enoch was born of this marriage. He was the sire of the present mankind. God created the entire universe within six days and on the seventh day, he retired to rest.

Now look at all these fanciful stories, and see how absurd they are. At one place we read Mohamed Sahib perched on a tree as *Nur* (light) in the person of a peacock, engaged in prayers for seventy thousand years and then getting perspired at the glance of Allah and his perspiration resulting in the coming into being of angels, men and this earth. At another place, we read Allah forming the body of Adam by combining clays of various lands and when it is ready like a clay toy, He directs a soul (about whose coming into being there is no cause given) to enter that toy body, and this soul hovers round that mould for two hundred years and then enters the clay model and it becomes Adam. Then Allah makes a horse of musk for his ride, places him in heavens, allows him to eat of all fruits but the fruit of the forbidden tree; when Adam eats of that forbidden tree, he is expelled from paradise and thrown on the earth along with his wife Eve, who was made out of a rib of Adam. (This string of childish fancies passes for knowledge in this twentieth century.—BIOGRAPHER.)

Then look at the Christian God. He forms a human model out of clay and breathes into the nostrils of that mould and Adam comes to life. God places him in heavens and forbids him the use of the fruits of two trees which were calculated to make him immortal and give him the knowledge of good and evil. Adam eats the fruits of the forbidden trees and he is cursed that he should earn his bread by the sweat of brow (Is perfect idleness a good thing?—AUTHOR) The woman is punished that she would bear children. (Is this a punishment for woman?—AUTHOR.)

Such a God is indeed a curiosity.

According to *Hadis*, Eve is every time blessed with twins—one male and the other female. These true brother and sister marry and procreate children. But according to Bible, Adam produces a child—a son—who without his helpmate—woman—becomes father of a child and of the future mankind.

According to Musalman's *Hadis*, *Nur-i-Mohamedi* in the person of peacock remained perched on a branch of tree, engaged in prayers for seventy thousand years but according to the Bible, God made the world in six days and retired to rest on the seventh.

Now is not this building of castles in the air like the story of Sheikh Chilli?

Q.—Can you tell me the various false and fiction-grounded religions which mankind has created in absence of the light of the true religion ?

A.—They are of various kinds as given below :—

1. Millions consider one or other creed or faith to be religion, *viz.*, they consider religion to consist in believing or cherishing faith in the so-called God, so-called gods, their incarnations, some prophet, messenger, *guru*, some religious scripture, etc. Now this belief or faith is not at all the true religion.

2. Millions take some external symbol for religion, *viz.*, they consider religion to consist in keeping a tuft of hair (*shikha*) ; keeping long hair and a comb, wearing an iron ring (*kara*) round the wrist, a knicker (*kachh*) with a string, a small sword (*kirpan*) in their belt ; shaving clean both moustaches and beard, rubbing ashes on the body, applying *chandan* or some form of *tilak* on the forehead ; putting on beads made out of *tulsi* plant, or wearing yellow, ochre or silken clothes ; boring holes in the ears and wearing rings in them ; keeping a begging bowl or iron tongs (*chimta*), wearing a long shirt, a long robe ; putting on *kharawan* (wooden sandals), etc.

Now none of these symbols means true religion.

3. Some people consider religion to consist in the pilgrimage to various so-called sacred places, enjoying *darshan* of idols, *samadhis*, graves, etc. ; having a dip in the waters of some specified place or drinking thereof. For instance, pilgrimage to Hardwar, Kurukshetra, Prayag, Kashi, Mathura, Bindraban, Gaya, Badrinath, Jagan Nath, Dwarka, Rameshwar, etc. ; having a dip into the Ganges, the Nerbidda, Sarjju, etc. ; taking a sip of Ganges water or going on pilgrimage to Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, etc., constitutes religion for millions. Now this pilgrimage and bathing do not constitute the true religion.

4. Millions consider *yoga* practices, *viz.*, controlling breath, adopting various bodily postures, etc., as religion. None of these things is true religion.

5. Millions consider religion to consist in reciting a *stotra* or some scripture, or singing some hymns, repeating of some *mantra* or name, sprinkling water, flowers or leaves, etc. on some idol, burning incenses before it, keeping food before it, placing some offering before certain grave, building *tazias*, etc. None of these things constitutes religion.

6. Millions consider religion to consist in the observance of false caste or colour distinctions or maintaining improper distinctions in matters of food and drink. All this is not true religion.

7. Millions consider the observing of fasts on some specified days or eating of some particular kind of food as religion, such as observing fast of food and water on Krishna's birthday or on *Eka-deshi* or Tuesday, etc., when all this is not religion at all.

8. Millions consider the observing of some social rite or ceremony as religion, such as tonsure ceremony, scared thread ceremony,

circumcision, baptism, slaughtering of animals for sacrifice etc. None of these things constitutes true religion but on the contrary, the sacrifice of innocent animals is positively a sin.

KARMA TATTVA.

Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Theosophists and others believe in transmigration or reincarnation of soul. This theory has been invented to explain away the difference in social, economic and other matters as existing in mankind. All this is based on the false premises that God being just, the differences must be due to man's *karmas*. In fact this theory is based on the one fundamental error regarding the relevancy of the deeds or thoughts of man and the necessary consequences. Now, if I take food and digest it I get new vigour of body and thus not only repair my physical tabernacle but also sustain it. If a man were to say that the necessary and immediate consequence of taking food would consist in getting a beautiful wife, or a high post or wealth, or land, fame, name, etc. and not in gaining the vigour and strength of body, he would be considered a fool. In the same way, if I take physical exercise, my muscles get strong and the whole body gets a new tone. But if a man were taught that the taking of physical exercise on this earth would not produce any immediate effect here on his present body, but would either get him wealth, etc., here or gain him these things after death, all reasonable persons would pronounce such teaching as false. Again mental training develops our intellectual powers here and now. But if one were taught that reading of history or philosophy or the learning of mathematics, economics, etc., would develop one's muscles or produce blood in one's body or strengthen his digestive power, such an inference would be put down as absurd. Again thinking noble thoughts and doing noble deeds would develop noble feelings in man. If I serve the sick and the suffering, feed the poor, clothe the naked and do such merciful deeds, I would develop mercy in my heart and would become more and more merciful. But if I go on killing animals, oppressing men, trampling upon their rights, feelings, honour and even their very existence, I certainly become cruel, as I develop a feeling of cruelty in myself. If I resist dishonesty and do deeds of scrupulous integrity and probity, I become an honest man. But if I act the other way, I become dishonest. Thus I develop noble or ignoble, higher or lower feelings in myself by good or evil actions. This is the natural result of my thoughts and deeds, and it follows immediately and here.

But if I were taught that serving the sick out of sheer sympathy would not be followed immediately by its natural result of developing my feeling of sympathy but that such an act would develop my physical muscles ten years after, or serve the purpose of food by satisfying my appetite and quenching my physical thirst some years after or getting my pockets full of money after death, would I not be considered as one who is misguided? Would it not amount to going astray from the right path? Would I not thereby have my reason clouded, rationality subdued and mere fancy fed fat?

Those believing in the transmigration of soul indulge in this fallacy. They believe that right or wrong actions are not followed *immediately* by their only *natural result* of making me a good or bad man, but their effects are postponed till the time of death. Even then the fruits that I am told to reap as a result of these acts in the next birth are wholly unnatural and imaginary fruits, *viz.*, tons of coins, high position, fame, name, power, beautiful wives and children and such other absolutely worldly objects or at the most salvation from the cycle of births and deaths.

Again, the believers in this theory judge man by artificial standard created by man and not by natural and universal processes. All social positions are the creation of man and they cannot undo the laws of Nature. A human child is born not because the parents are rich or poor, kings or peasants but because they are human beings. It is the sexual union that, under suitable conditions, produces a human child. If the poor mate under a fit condition, a child will be conceived and born. If the socially rich couple do so and suitable conditions prevail, they will have a child. The poverty and the riches have nothing to do with the birth of a child. The child is there because its parents have performed a specification under suitable conditions. They are the cause of the birth of the child. They produce both its body and life-power, called soul. The human child was nowhere existing as a separate entity before its parents had a union. Its entire being is a new entity owing its production to its parents. Hence instead of explaining the appearance of human child on biological conditions, if one were to indulge in the fiction of re-incarnation, he simply deceives himself. The biological conditions and not man-made distinctions produce a human child. The differences in physiological and psychological make-up of the child are also due to the differences in biological conditions leading to its conception and birth.

If these plain facts were observed, much of the confusion and cloudy atmosphere would disappear.

Bhagwan Dev Atma dealt with the philosophy of *Karma* at first in a beautiful booklet, *Vigyan mulak Mat* and *Kalpna mulak Mat* and again in an article in *Jiwan Path* in 1962 B. We give a very free translation of that from the thirty-fifth chapter of Bhagwan's *Autobiography*, Vol. I, where it is reproduced with some modifications in two separate parts:—

(1)

“*Inquirer*—Is the belief true which is cherished by the ‘Aryas’, ‘Sanatanists’, ‘Buddhists’, Theosophists and others that the soul of man after laying down its gross body, is reborn as a worm, a moth, a fish, a serpent, a bird, an animal, etc., according to his *karmas*?

Teacher.—No. It is absolutely false. These people entertain these false beliefs because they are ignorant of the nature of soul.

Man's whole being consists of his body and his life-power. This life-power of man is altogether different from the life-power of any

of the worms, fishes, birds, cattle, etc. The life-power of man as well as that of any other species can build no other body than that of its own type. It cannot do otherwise as that is impossible according to the law of Nature.

The life-power in man builds and can build, from the impregnated cell in the womb of its mother, only a human body. Life-power of the impregnated cell in human mother's womb does not build and cannot build a body of lion or wolf, partridge, bug, mosquito, or any other insect, etc. When the life-power builds a complete human body in the mother's womb and the child is born, it is the same life-power that maintains it and sustains its form by assimilating food daily. The life-power of man builds its human body out of the same food constituents which are eaten by the animals just in the same way as the life-power of animals builds animal body out of the food constituents which are taken by them. As it is impossible for human life-power to build any other body than that of a human being, in the same way, it is impossible for any life-power of an animal to build human body.

Inquirer.--Do you then mean to say that the soul of man does not, after death of its gross body, enter any animal body?

Teacher.—Yes, I do mean it. It is absolutely impossible for it to migrate into an animal body after death. As it is impossible for the human life-power to build, on this earth, a body of an animal, in the same way it is impossible for it, even after death, to enter into any other body.

Inquirer.—Then what happens to the life-power or soul of man after it casts off its gross body?

Teacher.—The life-power of man, after casting off the gross body, is not able to form another gross body. Nor can it remain alive without a human body. But what it does is this. It builds, under certain favourable circumstances, a subtle body, out of the material of the subtle particles stored by it in the physical body which in all respects resembles in form and features, its gross body, so that the departed souls who knew him before are able enough to immediately identify him much in the same way as we recognise a long parted father or brother after years of separation.

Inquirer.—Is then the belief in the transmigration of soul false?

Teacher.—Yes; it is absolutely false.

Inquirer.—Then how is man rewarded for his good or evil *karmas*?

Teacher.—Man harvests the results of his *karmas*—good or bad—there and then, and he has not to stand his trial before any God, *Yamraj* or *Dharamraj*, etc.

Inquirer.—How?

Teacher.—As the bodily condition of man changes there and then by the food that he eats, the water that he drinks, the air that he breathes, the exercise that he takes; in the same way the soul of man

undergoes a change by every thought, deed or act that he does with regard to himself or his various relations with whom he is bound up. Every physical, mental and spiritual activity brings about an immediate change corresponding to its nature. As during physical exercise man's muscles are immediately affected by every movement in practising dumb-bells or in gymnastics, etc., in the same way soul undergoes an immediate change in its organism or its inner condition by every thought and action which it does in any relation. According to this immutable law of change man harvests immediately the results of his good or bad feelings or deeds.

Inquirer.—What is the nature of the change that he undergoes ?

Teacher.—According to his good or bad feelings or deeds, the nature of his soul becomes higher or lower. Every lower feeling and deed makes the soul-deformed, degenerated and diseased, and vitiates its vitality or constructive power. As any consuming malady brings about daily deterioration of the patient's body and vitality, and leads to his death if he is not cured of it in time, in the same way, every human soul brings about deterioration of its organism and vitality by adopting lower courses of life. And if he is not able to get freedom from these lower courses of life in time, he, besides suffering manifold miseries, gets totally annihilated one day.

Inquirer.—This is a horrible end.

Teacher.—Undoubtedly. As opposed to this if a man gets freedom from the soul destroying diseases and cultivates higher forces of soul, he becomes able to behave better in various relations and thus grows healthy, strong and pure. He also develops his vitality of soul-life or its constructive power. The nature of his soul becomes sweet, beneficial, peaceful and blessed.

Inquirer.—This is an extremely desirable and beautiful change.

Teacher.—Indeed so. Hence the *supreme end of human life is to get freedom from all low-loves and low-hates, and develop all those higher forces of higher life* which enable a man to establish heavenly relations and higher evolutionary harmony with various kingdoms of Nature.

Inquirer.—No teacher of any religion has on the face of this earth taught such a true and science-grounded supreme ideal and object of man's life.

Teacher.—No, none has discovered this glorious truth and none has taught this.

Inquirer.—Such teachings bring out the untrue and imaginary nature of the teachings of the prevalent religious systems as regards virtue and vice, heaven and hell, etc., etc.

Teacher.—Yes, they do so very vividly.

(2)

The substance of the teachings which Pandit Dayanand has left for the Arya Samaj regarding the fiction of transmigration, with some of his own new additions or comments, are as follows :—

The souls of all the persons who depart daily first remain in the atmosphere for some time and then God awards them the fruits of their good or bad actions. Having received the orders of God for their actions, the souls accordingly enter the bodies of men or animals by means of food or drink or through some aperture in the body and having got into their semen get a new birth. If a man has been guilty of theft or adultery, etc., he is born as a tree or plant in the next birth. If he has been guilty of using abusive language, he is reborn as a sweeper. If he has done good deeds, he is reborn in the house of a Raja or Sardar and gets immense wealth, beautiful women as wives, delicious dishes for food, costly clothes to wear, lots of servants, etc., to attend on him day and night. The name of all these joys is '*Samanya Swargya*' (ordinary heaven). The name of the miseries suffered on this planet is 'hell'.

So long as man does not get freedom from the bondage of *karmas*, he enjoys the pleasures of heaven or suffers the pangs of hell. When he gets salvation from *karmas*, he is not sent back to this earth but is kept by God in himself where he lives without any physical or subtle body and roams about the whole universe dependent on Him. He gets any kind of joy he wishes for. This stage of happiness is called '*Vishesh Swargya*' or 'special heaven.'

Pandit Dayanand has given the time limit which every saved soul has to enjoy in special heavens and which is as under :—

One *Chaturyugi* consists of four million, five hundred and twenty thousand years. One day consists of two thousand such *Chaturyugies*. Full thirty such days form one month. Such twelve months constitute one full year and hundred such years make a '*Prantkal*' or '*Mahakalp*'. According to this system of calculation invented by the so-called God a man who has got salvation lives in the special heaven for 311,040,000,000,000 years. After this period is over the saved soul, according to its imaginary *karmas* (for he had once got salvation from *karmas* when he went to special heaven), is again sent to this earth to rebegin the cycle of births and deaths in various forms in accordance with its good or bad *karmas*.

What a terrible flight of fancy ! This *gup* of Pandit Dayanand is distinguishable from the *gups* (exaggerated flights of fancy) of Mussalmans and Christians as under :—

1. The day of judgment as believed in by Mussalmans and Christians comes on some appointed day while the God of Dayanand holds court every day, and passes judgment on the actions of the departed souls every day.

2. Mohamedan God sends his faithful followers after death to a fancied heaven where he gives them the gifts of fruit, *hoors* (beautiful women), etc., while the Aryans after death get a birth in this world in a rich man's or a Raja's house where they also get good food, good clothes, beautiful women, comfortable conveyances, servants, etc.

This kind of enjoyment promised by both is almost of the same kind and is altogether sensual.

3. Islamic and Christian God condemns to hell one whom he does not send to heaven. The Aryan God does the same (only the hell of Aryas is here on this earth).

4. Muslim and Christian heaven is enjoyed eternally by the believers. The Aryan 'special heaven', though not eternal, extends at least to long ages, while their hell obtained through cycles of rebirths is eternal.

The theists believe their God to be omnipotent. But he has not got even the power to call all the founders of different faiths and to tell them that all the various tales which they have invented and attributed to him are pure fiction or at least some of them are fictitious, and that they should not propagate them in his name. But this is possible only when such a being had a real existence. When his entire being is the creation of man's fancy, how can such a fanciful being reveal or impart any knowledge?

The believers in the transmigration of soul think that if this theory were discarded, God would cease to be just. What if he ceases to be such? Is it permissible to believe in a falsehood to prove somebody to be just? If in this particular case belief in a fiction is essential for the purposes of religion, why should not all fictions, that are taught by various other faiths on the nature and fruits of virtue and vice, be credited and cherished? And if justice of God cannot be proved on any other false theory, how can it be proved by the false theory of transmigration of soul? Is it not true, that you believe your just God to be present everywhere? And, yet, in his presence, this planet of ours presents a horrid arena for the gruesome acts of injustice, cruelty, oppression and lamentations. Is it not true that hundreds of innocent men are murdered every day, thousands upon thousands of people are massacred in battles and wars, millions of animals are being slaughtered and billions of eggs eaten every day? Is it not true that thefts are committed, dacoities take place, sexual sins and crimes soil the earth, brothels exist to destroy the purity of life, use of intoxicants prevails on a considerable scale, dishonesties take place, and this earth groans under the weight of evil, sin, crime and falsehood? Is it not true that thousands of sacred promises are broken, disloyalty and infidelity reign? Cast your glance anywhere and you see injustice and cruelty visiting all corners of the earth. And yet your all-powerful God—whom you call just and merciful and present everywhere—sees all these tragedies and havocs, with an eye of great indifference. Will you tell us where his feelings of justice and mercy are hidden? You find among human parents, several such persons, who struggle hard to save their children from evil or from misery, but your God, whom you call your supreme father and supreme mother, not only sees all this reign of injustice and cruelty practised upon his own children with absolute

indifference, but visits several calamities like earthquakes, etc., on their head, and thus kills them by thousands. There is a tyrant, practising cruelty on others in the presence of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent God, but He is as silent as a grave. A good and chaste woman is assaulted by a ruffian, who is determined to violate the chastity of her life. She laments. She cries for help to your God. And yet this all merciful God, though present there, is not moved by this painful spectacle at all. While you are alive on this earth, your God is absolutely unmoved though evil deeds darken the whole horizon, but he bestirs himself and holds daily and hourly courts to pass judgments when you are dead. What a terribly false faith?

Again, do not the believers in this myth know, that the decision of a judge is of some value and efficacy, only, when there is an executive power to carry out his judgments, and that it is not enough for a judge merely to pronounce that a particular offender should be fined or imprisoned but that there should be a police force to take hold of the convicted person, and execute the judge's orders? Now those who believe in the theory of an appointed day of judgment at least surround their God with angels, but the Aryas give no such army to their own God and depend only on the प्रेरणा (or impulse) imparted by God. Now, if, after death, any sinner or offender, who reaches the court of Aryan God (profiting by his past experience that God did not punish him at all, when living on this earth though he committed sins which he believed to be opposed to God's will) refuses point blank to abide by the decision passed on his soul by the Aryan God, what would God do in that case?

The theists do believe, and declare, that their God does communicate his wishes or voice to them, or incites them, here on this earth, to save themselves from an evil way. But is it not a fact that, even in the cases of those who cherish this belief as true, this voice or impulse communicated by the so-called God is honoured by thousands in utter breach? Now, if it is possible at one place to defy his voice or impulse with impunity, is it not possible to defy it at another? Now, if the Aryan God communicates his orders to a culprit to get himself reborn as a worm or a tree and he disobeys, what would God do to him? And, as a Punjabi mother, seeing her son disobey her, remains silent with a mere expression of her feeling, "You naughty boy, you do not obey my orders," in the same way, God also would keep quiet after some such expression when a naughty child of his refuses to carry out his orders.

Now, if you say that a soul, after its physical death, lives in the air (and what about the soul of a fish please? Would it not want water?) in an unconscious state and hence God Almighty sends it against its wishes into the body of a plant, animal or man by his own power, what about those, who have attained special heavens, and are roaming at leisure in various worlds of the universe? These souls are believed to be in a wakeful condition and all alert. What would

God do to them if they refuse point blank to obey the command, voice or impulse communicated by God when they are ordered to be reborn ?

Remember, that, what is a pure myth would always remain a myth, and if you try to uphold it at one place it would give way at another.

But suppose for the sake of argument that thousands of souls obey these impulses of God, and they enter the seeds of trees, the eggs of fishes, worms or the wombs of animals, what then ? Is it not true that millions of gram seeds are eaten, millions of corn seeds ground into flour, cooked and taken in the form of cakes by men and animals, when, according to your belief, all these were to grow into plants ? Now such of the gram seeds as were fried must have the souls within them also fried. How then is the order of God obeyed ? But if you say that, souls are not fried but they enter the bodies of those who eat the fried gram, what happens then ? If you believe that these souls having entered the human or animal body (and please how many souls enter one body as thousands of gram are eaten by one man ?) get reborn as men or animals, they did not at least become plants of gram, corn, etc., as was ordained by your Almighty God. What then becomes of his sense of justice ? In the same way what about the souls who enter eggs when these eggs are eaten by men ? They can not become serpents, fish or any bird in the stomach of human beings. What happens then to the justice-based orders of your great God ? The fact is that theory of the transmigration of soul is a pure fiction, born of human fancy and nothing else.

TRUE AND FALSE CONCEPTION OF SOUL.

It was the discovery of the true nature and organism of soul and the laws pertaining to its evolution and devolution which enabled Bhagwan Dev Atma to reveal to the world an altogether new conception of religion. Hence it is necessary at this stage to describe what Bhagwan Dev Atma declared as false conceptions of soul and what he declared to be its true conception.

In the year 1903, Bhagwan wrote and published a pamphlet in which he very briefly described the true and false conception of soul which we translate here in order to give a true picture of Bhagwan's discovery. The translation is throughout a free translation in which an attempt is made to keep as far as possible the spirit of Bhagwan's own writings. It runs as under :—

1. Millions possess no true knowledge at all of their soul. They do nothing beyond passing their entire precious lives in merely eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, sporting, vain talk, earning wealth, property, possessions, winning name, fame, enjoying sensual and other enjoyments and owing to their ignorance, superstition, false beliefs, sinful practices, proving extremely harmful in various relations, and inflicting undue pain and misery on others. *They possess soul-life but know nothing what that soul-life is.* They do not know how

that soul-life evolves or degenerates under the operation of the immutable laws of Nature and how the continuous course of degeneration brings about its total extinction. They are devoid of this most essential knowledge. They grope in utter darkness about their own souls.

2. There are millions among these people—including Rajas and Maharajas, the learned and ignorant, priests and *pandits*, *moulvies* and *padres*, lecturers and preachers, teachers and the taught, artists and agriculturists, traders and shop-keepers, barristers and *vakils*, judges and magistrates, doctors and engineers, governors and officers, and all other men of various grades—who cherish belief in the current misconceptions about soul which being opposed to the facts and laws of Nature are fiction-ridden and false. These imagination based false conceptions about soul are not only mutually opposed but they prove extremely harmful also.

3. Religion is intimately related to the soul-life of man. Therefore so long as a man does not acquire true knowledge about soul, he cannot possess true and complete knowledge of *Dharma*.

4. Various false and fiction-grounded conceptions about soul which are prevalent among millions on this earth, are as under :—

(i) Soul is *Sat Chit Anand* (i.e., true, intelligent and felicitous) *brahmn*. It has become a human soul under the influence of *maya*.

(ii) Soul is the command, particle or image of God.

(iii) Soul is the creation and hence the progeny of God.

(iv) Soul is indestructible and eternal or without a beginning.

(v) Soul is created but it is immortal.

(vi) Soul is to be brought before the throne of God on an appointed Day of Judgment to stand its trial. It will be sentenced according to its *karmas*, either to go to heaven or to hell for eternity. It will undergo no further change in its state there.

(vii) There is no appointed Day of Judgment, but on leaving its gross body soul is taken to God. It is according to its actions either permitted to stay for some time in heaven or sentenced to be reborn as a man, animal or plant on this earth.

(viii) Soul also dies with the death of the body and nothing survives after its physical death.

So on and so forth.

Why do so many different conceptions of soul prevail? It is because before the advent of the founder of the *Dev Dharma* no man possessed the capacity to investigate into the nature of soul on the basis of the scientific method of investigation. No man did, in fact, discover the truths about soul because the times were not ripe. The age of science had not dawned. And, again, no one possessed those unique highest psychic forces which have evolved in Bhagwan Dev Atma and which were highly necessary for the evolution of that highest psychic light in which alone these truths about soul could be directly seen. To say nothing about the nature of the life of soul, huge

ignorance prevailed and false teachings were given even as regards such inanimate objects as the sun, the stars, the moon, the earth, etc., and their nature. These false teachings possess the mind of millions even to-day.

The science-grounded truths which Bhagwan Dev Atma has discovered and declared about the nature of soul are as under :—

(1) As the body of man has evolved from the elements that compose the material objects—such as oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, etc., in the same way, the soul of man has evolved out of that organised life-power which has evolved out of an inorganic force. It is this organised life-power which has, under variety of conditions, produced or built variety of bodily forms in the vegetable, animal and human worlds.

(2) It is this organised life-power which, under suitable conditions, builds a body. It is this life-power which maintains the body and keeps it alive. It is this life-power which procreates its prototypes and thus multiplies into many.

(3) The organised life-power has an organised existence much in the same way as body has an organised existence.

(4) As the body grows or decays under favourable or unfavourable conditions, in the same way, soul too develops or decays according to the higher or lower changes it undergoes in its constituent powers or forces. Thus, both the body and soul of man evolve or dissolve under favourable or unfavourable environments and are constantly subject to the operation of the evolutionary and devolutionary processes of Nature.

(5) As the human body falling into the grip of unsuitable environments becomes diseased and begins to lose its beauty and vitality, and, if the course of disease continues unabated or unchecked, it altogether dies ; in the same way, the soul organism too begins, in unsuitable conditions, to degenerate and lose its beauty and vitality according to its degeneration and if this course continues unchecked, it dies altogether, and with its death the entire entity of man is annihilated.

(6) As God-belief is not at all necessary for curing physical maladies of man and sustaining his bodily existence, in the same way God-belief is not at all necessary in saving soul from its degeneration and death.

(7) As a competent doctor and effective medicines are helpful in curing physical maladies of man, in the same way, in order to get freedom from its slavery to ignorance, false beliefs, low attachments and sinful courses and to evolve higher life, every fit soul requires the help of a true preceptor equipped with highest psychic forces (*i.e.*, complete love for truth and goodness and complete hatred for untruth and wrong).

(8) The one true and supreme ideal of man's life is to acquire true knowledge of and get true freedom from every low course of life (every low-love and low-hate) and to evolve all such higher

feelings which may enable him to establish higher harmony or true evolutionary adjustment with various kingdoms of Nature.

5. *Dev Dharm* is the name of that science-grounded system of religion which Bhagwan Dev Atma has taught to the world after he discovered the above truths, based as they are on the facts and laws of Nature and are therefore based on science.

6. By the discovery of these science-grounded truths, Bhagwan has revolutionised the whole religious philosophy of the world. He has shown the utterly false character of the teachings which various fiction-grounded faiths have given about :—

- (a) Creation and Creator ;
- (b) Heaven and Hell ;
- (c) Life after Death ;
- (d) Justice and the Day of Judgment ;
- (e) Prayer and Worship ;
- (f) Pilgrimage and *Brat* or Fast ;
- (g) Hymns and religious songs ;
- (h) *Jap* (reciting) and *Path* (reading) ;
- (i) *Yoga* and *Samadhi* (mental concentration) ;
- (j) Gods and goddesses ;
- (k) Salvation and Nirvana ;
- (l) Virtue and Vice.

In place of these false teachings Bhagwan Dev Atma has given true and scientific teachings.

7. These true teachings are imparted to all those men and women who have come to realise the necessity of their own good and who are not only free from the blinding influences of vanity and various prejudices or biases but possess true reverence and humility and are able to think dispassionately over them.

8. Apart from receiving the benefits of these most precious truths, these fortunate and fit souls have been able, by the influences of Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique light and power, to get true freedom here on this earth from their various sinful and criminal tendencies and evolve here one or other higher feeling in their souls. Thus here on this planet they have blessed their own lives.

On the occasion of the seventeenth anniversary of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan Dev Atma delivered an illuminating and most informing lecture on the philosophy of nature and soul. One of the *sewaks* of Bhagwan took down the substance of that lecture. It was published in the *Jiwan Path*—a Hindi journal of the Samaj—in the month of Phalgun, Sambat 1960 B. We give below a free translation thereof, especially of the portion touching the life-power of man :—

“After this, Bhagwan Dev Atma gave a discourse on another most profound and precious truth. He explained it in such an easy

and concise manner that it went home to the hearts of the audience. It gave us an idea of the wonderful grasp which his extraordinary mental powers had of these great truths. He had brought a newly-cut stem of a rose plant. He said that that stem or cutting of the plant was in a living condition then. But it could die or be destroyed. 'If we place this cutting in fire, it will dry up and die. But if we plant it in a suitable ground, and water it and allow it sufficient atmospheric air and sunlight, it would show us a wonderful drama of the work of life-power within it. It would shoot out roots, leaves and new branches and gradually grow and blossom into a beautiful rose bush which would yield beautiful roses. Now the question would arise, who organised and brought this new plant into existence? Naturally one would say that its own life-power did all this. If you eliminate life-power, the entire work would cease and no amount of prayers offered by even a million of theists before the throne of their so-called Almighty God would resuscitate the dead cutting. In short, it is this life-power, that builds an organised body for itself. It is this life-power which sustains and maintains it and enables it to grow into many forms. As this life-power is the supreme thing in a living existence, in the same way, it is subject to the processes of growth under favourable environments and gradual decay and death under unfavourable environments."

"Bhagwan Dev Atma had brought two other plants in order to illustrate this truth. One was in a blooming condition and the other looked naked and shorn of all leaves. One was a plant of pansy full of verdant leaves, living twigs and full of flowers. The other was a *tulsi* plant. It had no leaves and no freshness. Some of its twigs were even wholly dried up. Comparing the two plants, Bhagwan explained that though both these plants lived in the same season they were not affected equally. For 'pansy' this season is favourable but for *tulsi* it is unfavourable. The result is that while one has grown to its full bloom and flowery condition, the other is going down. Now so long as this season exists and affects both, they could not escape its consequences. But when this season changes and new season sets in, both these plants would be affected accordingly. The pansy which now looks fresh and full of leaves, would wither away, while the bare and naked *tulsi* would put on a new appearance. Its living twigs would shoot out new leaves and in a short time it would put on a verdant coat of smiling green leaves. But mark one thing more. Though the favourable season would favourably influence the living branches of the *tulsi* plant, it would fail to revive the dead ones of the same plant. (Here Bhagwan broke a dead and dried up branch and showed that it had become lifeless.) Why? This is because these branches possessed no life-power or because life-power had disappeared from them. Now all this can clearly testify to the fact that it is not any God, Allah or Parmeshwar who builds the bodies of organised living existences but it is the life-power and life-power alone which not only builds an organised body for it under favourable environments but sustains and maintains that body. Thus you can see that the most essential thing in any

living existence is its own life-power. It is this life-power that keeps an existence living. It is this life-power which sustains it. It is this life-power which gives it beauty of form and evolves it. If this life-power decays and dies then the entire existence of living being extinguishes. No God or false God-belief of any collection of men would bring it to life."

"Bhagwan also explained how the same life-power had assumed variety of forms and developed variety of characteristics amidst variety of conditions working in Nature. In the vegetable world it had assumed one set of forms and qualities, in the animal world it had acquired new characteristics and taken different forms, while in the human world it developed still greater and newer characteristics and become different. *The existences are higher or lower according to the higher and lower nature of their life-powers.*

"In the end, Bhagwan Dev Atma said that in the civilised world though even the greatest scientists had discovered fundamental truths pertaining to biology, yet they had failed to discover those great truths which concerned the life-power or soul, its higher or lower life and its opposite consequences. 'They could not discover how the life-power or soul of man evolves in its form and qualities and how it decays and dies. They have not been able to discover and know the nature of those forces, slavery to which brings about man's degeneration or of those higher loves which lead to its higher evolution and beauty. They also could not know how after attaining higher evolution by means of higher feelings of heart man becomes able to go and inhabit higher planes in the next world after death and how in adverse conditions he either dies with his physical death or even if he succeeds in building a finer body after the death of his gross body, he gradually goes down, and after continuous decay ultimately becomes extinct. Thus false beliefs prove of no avail to him in checking his degenerating course. When such is the state of affairs with the scientists, it is idle to talk about the founders or propagandists of fiction-grounded faiths. The founders of those faiths lived in an age when science had not advanced or even taken birth. How could they then have delivered a message of science-grounded religion? As Nature in its own ripe time produced scientists who were able to carry on scientific research in several departments of Nature, in the same way, in its own good time Nature manifested Bhagwan Dev Atma, who discovered the one true universal system of religion and declared it to the world in order to rescue mankind from the cobwebs of false beliefs and false creeds. This manifestation of the one true universal religion discovered the all-pervading laws of evolution and devolution relating to the life-power or soul of man and thus gave to religion that unshakable basis or foundation which it had never been given before."

SOUL'S SALVATION FROM DEGENERATION AND ITS EVOLUTION IN HIGHER FORCES OR POWERS.

Bhagwan contributed in 1960 Bikrami era, a very interesting and instructive article on the freedom of soul from its degenerating

courses and evolution in it of higher forces of higher life. As it relates to the period about which we have been writing and since it practically supplements the last chapter, we give here a free translation thereof (*vide* Chapter XXXVIII of Bhagwan's *Autobiography*, Vol. 1) in order to make the picture fuller:—

“Just look at that *kakir* or *babul* tree. It is covered with yellow threads of a leafless ivy which is known as *amarbel*. It has neither leaves nor any flowers. It is a leafless and flowerless ivy. Look there at the jessamine (*chambeli*). It is also an ivy. But unlike *amarbel*, it is not devoid of leaves and flowers. It is covered with thousands of green leaves and has got hundreds of beautiful white fragrant flowers. In the course of evolution, *amarbel* could not grow leaves and flowers while jessamine did grow them. Like *amarbel* there are millions of human beings inhabiting this earth who follow some so-called religious creed and worship one or other deity, but are devoid of the higher consciousnesses by which they could free themselves from the evil courses of their lives and develop higher loves which should produce higher courses of life in them. Ostensibly they profess to belong to this or that religious society or sect but they are in fact utterly destitute of true *Dharmic* or higher life; and being slaves to low-loves and low-hates they are daily degenerating their soul-life. Their soul-life is daily wasting away and losing the higher vitality or constructive power and approaching fast that fatal day when they would become utterly extinct so far as their individuality is concerned.

The condition of these people is like the mental state of a child who is a prey to the acute form of diarrhoea and is getting weaker and weaker every day because of continuous motions, and yet he is utterly ignorant of the havoc that the fell malady is working in his body by gradually reducing his vitality, enfeebling his major organs and thus drawing him nigh to the death of his body. These ignorant people, though grown-up in years do not realise that *as there is a limit to bodily vitality, so, there is a limit to the vitality of the soul*, and as the universal processes of evolution and devolution are working day and night upon their body, in the same way, these same universal processes are ruling their soul-life too. And as the bodily vitality is destroyed under the operation of cosmic laws, if the bodily diseases continue their ravages on it, in the same way, soul-vitality too goes on getting weaker and weaker with diseases caused by the slavery to degenerating low-loves and low-hates which compel a man to go wrong in his various cosmic relations, and the day draws nearer and nearer when his soul-life, after losing its whole vitality would become totally extinct. Under the poisonous influences of old superstitious beliefs which they cherish, they believe that it is the body only that dies but that there is no death for the soul which they think to be immortal. They are not able to realise that the period of human history in which their ancestors declared soul to be immortal, was in fact a dark age. It was characterised by utter ignorance of the true knowledge of the nature of man's life-

power. During that dark age not only rank ignorance prevailed about the momentous problems of soul-life but there was darkness even about many external phenomena. The so-called revealed books which these ancient people believed as God-given are full of many impossible or absurd teachings which militate against the facts and laws of Nature.

Even in our own times there are very few men who have any realisation of the fact of the universality and eternity of those natural processes or laws which operate in this infinite universe. So far as the knowledge of the life-power or soul of man is concerned, all such people who believe in the immortality of soul, grope in the dark. Owing to this unrelieved and horrible ignorance about man's soul, this world could not get that system of religion which has for its foundation the facts and the universal laws of Nature. When humanity was ignorant of what constitutes the one, true and universal religion, how it is related to the soul-life of man, and how this soul of man is subject to the universal laws of Nature, all its various religious faiths and creeds which it cherishes could not but be fiction-grounded and false. Hence though millions possess soul-life, they are destitute of the light which shows the truths about it. They have no knowledge of the true universal system of religion and are entangled in the meshes of false faiths. Their condition is indeed most deplorable.

The number of those who believe in one or other religious faith swells to crores. But how many among them are free even from those ten gross sins, which every one seeking admission into the lowest grade of the membership of the Dev Samaj has to renounce and which he has to pledge to refrain from throughout his life. These ten gross sins are as under :—

1. I will not commit the following four sins relating to business or calling, *viz.* :—

(a) I will not take bribes.

(b) I will not weigh or measure more or less with a view to cheat others.

(c) I will not substitute one thing for another with a view to cheat others.

(d) I will not be dishonest in paying or receiving the wages and rates fixed for work done or the taxes which may be already fixed.

2. I will not commit theft.

3. I will not suppress debts and deposits of others.

4. I will not wrongly dispossess anybody of anything, nor would I abet another in such an act.

5. I will not gamble.

6. I will not pass idle life when I am able to work.

7. I will not commit adultery or any unnatural offence, nor would I marry during the life-time on this earth of my wife or husband.

8. I will not use or give to others or purchase or sell any of the intoxicants,—*viz.*, wine, opium, *bhang*, tobacco, *chandu*, *charas*, cocaine, etc.—for the purpose of intoxication, nor would I cultivate or prepare them, nor would I serve under any person or at any shop which may be dealing exclusively in intoxicants and where I may have to do only such work.

9. I will not myself eat flesh or anything made thereof, nor trade in flesh, nor would I give it to another for eating, nor would I seek employment in a shop or under a person who exclusively trades in flesh or articles made thereof and in whose service I may have to do only such business.

10. I will not kill any sentient being without any proper or justifiable cause.

Now is it not true that crores among those who boast of believing in the so-called one God are not free from the above ten gross sins? Is it not true that believers in one God commit many such sins and crimes which polytheists or worshippers of idols do not commit? Where then lies the beauty of God-belief or God-worship? Being devoid of the true light pertaining to soul-life such men boast of their creed under the dominant influence of this or that false belief and declare their own creed to be true and all other creeds to be false. Judged in the unique light relating to soul-life, all these prevalent world faiths prove shallow and baseless while the fruits of their teachings prove of no merit at all. The so-called revealed books which are centuries old or which, according to some believers, are millions of years old, have not by their teachings influenced the lives of their followers even so far as to enable them to give up such gross sins as theft, adultery, cheating, bribes-taking, etc. Nay, they have not been able to wean all of them even from one sin alone. What has then God or the so-called revealed books done for man in this world? These crores who are now committing theft, adultery, bribery and cheating, etc., were utterly innocent when they were babies. They did not commit any of these crimes then. Whence did they then develop this tendency for committing such and various other sins and crimes? When they were children and were quite ignorant of and did not believe in any creed, they were free from all these sins. But as they grew in years and began to believe in and belong to one or the other religious creed, they developed the life of sin and crime. What did then your creed do for you? What did your so-called religious books do for you? What good did your worship do to you? What good did your *rishies*, *munies*, *prophets*, *priests*, *maulvies*, *padres*, *bhikshus*, preachers and others do to you? How have your baths in the so-called sacred rivers, your pilgrimages, reading of scriptures, recitations of hymns and *mantras* or performance of *Havans* profited you? What good did your God or incarnations of God or other deities whom you worship do to you? As children your life was not so

bad. But as you grew in years and became zealous or fanatical about the beliefs of your creeds, you became lower in life and developed vicious tendencies. Did not this change for the worse take place in you because the seeds of those low-loves and low-hates were present in you when you were children, which you developed in conditions favourable to their growth, and with your years they blossomed amidst environments suitable for their growth, and your soul-life became gradually a slave to them? The growth of these low-loves and low-hates in you made you a hunter after wealth, position, fame, name, power, various sensual enjoyments, etc., and you gladly began to commit various sins and crimes in order to gratify them. *Though you profess faith in this or that religious denomination you feel no pain and no hatred in committing various sins and crimes. Nay, you generally feel peculiar pleasure in the commission of several sins and crimes.* The result of all this is that instead of showing any desire for getting freedom from their bondage, you usually develop greater and greater zeal and love for the commission of these dark and horrible deeds. They degenerate and vitiate your soul-life but all your professions of creeds, your reading of scriptures, your worship, your recitations, your *Hom*, etc., do not and cannot give you any help in liberating you from the degeneration of your soul-life.

Those who have joined the Dev Samaj were in the same category with you before they were changed. They also belonged to one or other religious faith or creed. Many of them used to worship, read scriptures, recite some *mantras*, etc., sing hymns, perform *sandhya* and offer prayers, etc. But all this brought about no change for the better in their hearts. They continued to be slaves to their feelings of low-loves and low-hates and owing to this slavery they continued to commit sins and crimes. They felt quite happy and contented with their sinful life and instead of getting better by their worship, prayers, readings, etc., they went deeper into the mire of evil and vicious life. They were in the grip of low-loves and low-hates, and so long as some elevating higher power did not influence their hearts, they could not as a matter of course get freedom from the slavery of these evil forces.

The uniqueness of Bhagwan Dev Atma, the founder of the Dev Samaj, consists in this, that on the one hand, he is a fountain or source of that unique light which reveals the true laws and principles pertaining to soul-life, and, on the other, he is possessed of that unique power which liberates souls from the grip of various low-loves and low-hates and evolves higher and constructive forces in them. Hence all the fit souls, who fortunately got the influences of this unique light and this unique power, have undergone marvellous change for the better. The souls who were drifting helplessly in the current of evil-life and were deaf to the voice of sanity, who disliked to give up the slavery to their low-loves and low-hates and, like a traditional sparrow fascinated by the gaze of a serpent, felt helplessly drawn

into the gaping abyss of vicious life, and who sank deeper and deeper into the mire of worldly life, turned quite a new leaf in their life when the evil-destroying higher influences of Bhagwan Dev Atma's power began to work upon them. Instead of drifting helplessly into the current of evil-life they rebelled against it. If they were given to theft, they gave that up. Those who were given to drinking, use of opium, hemp, tobacco, etc., renounced the use of these intoxicants. Those who soiled their hearts by adultery, abjured that abominable vice. The gamblers ceased to gamble, the hunters gave up hunting. Those who killed animals for food or used flesh of animals killed by others for similar purposes, turned resolutely against all that. Those long-haired Sikhs who committed infanticide by killing their daughters at their birth, gave up this dark deed and thus many an innocent girl-babe was saved. Those who committed various acts of dishonesty in their profession and took bribes, abandoned all these evil courses of life. Those selfish debtors who possessed no feeling for paying off their debts, were rescued from this evil habit. The idle and slothful people developed into industrious men. Those who felt no scruples in giving false evidence in courts and who thus helped in the murder of justice, ceased to perjure themselves. Those persons who destroyed their domestic peace and harmony by going wrong in various relations—viz., in relation to their parents and children, their brothers and sisters, their husbands and wives, etc.,—were liberated from their perverted courses of life with the result that in place of friction, mutual distrust, quarrels and heart-breaks, now reigns peace, co-operation, trust and higher harmony in their homes.

Again those who had gained money or other things by dishonesty or theft and had committed other wrongs, were further awakened to the consciousness of their past sins to such an extent, that they paid back to proper persons all their ill-gotten money etc., and offered genuine apologies for their wrong doings. Those again who were utterly selfish, who would not move their little finger for the service of others, have turned into serviceable persons. They now serve others, some by means of their physical energy, some with their money and others with their education. There are again those who serve others by means of the noble forces of higher life which they have developed in their own souls.

All these marvellous changes are the true miracles of this age. How were these wonderful changes brought about? This question arises in every thoughtful mind. By arriving at a correct solution of this question, one can surely feel, to some extent, the true glory of the Dev Samaj and its founder. One would then realise the truth that no-one can get freedom from the slavery of low-loves and low-hates without assimilating rays of such unique light which may show the horror of such slavery, and of such unique power which may destroy lower and sinful life and evolve higher life. One would then realise that his old religious beliefs, his worship, his rituals, etc., could not at all avail him. Again, nobody can evolve true, higher or

Dharmic life without receiving the most blessed influences of the above unique light and unique power. *It is owing to the absence of the unique rays of this unique light and this unique power that we find in all climes and all creeds, the majority of men in the most deplorable condition of life.* As contrasted with their woe-ridden state of soul, the glory of the work of the Dev Samaj and its unique founder appears resplendent.

Moreover, by assimilating the most blessed unique light of Bhagwan Dev Atma, a fit soul would see for himself, that a man is not safe as regards his soul-life even though he may be (1) free from all the sins of the above kind or most of the gross ones (though only a limited number of such persons even can be found among the followers of various denominations), (2) given to religious exercises such as worship, prayers, *yoga samadhi*, etc., and (3) devoting his energies, moved not by any low-love of money fame, name, rank, etc., but by pure unadulterated feeling of mercy, or philanthropy; so long as he (a) is destitute of several higher consciousnesses which are necessary to liberate him from various other lower courses of life in several cosmic relations, (b) is devoid of those various higher loves which are essentially needed in his soul for its higher evolution, and (c) does not awaken to the realisation of supreme ideal of higher life after renouncing all lower ideals of amassing money property, etc. The absence of these higher consciousnesses and higher loves is bound to result gradually but surely in that dreadful end for him which is called total extinction, though that may be deferred to a much longer period than in the case of those who lead a base and most vicious life.

It is because of this that no member of the Dev Samaj is promoted to the higher grades of the society, so long as he does not go beyond giving up ten sins and fails to develop true yearning for *Dharma* and those higher consciousnesses which destroy evil life, and so long as he does not evolve higher life which helps to develop purity and altruism to some extent. *In the unique atmosphere of the Dev Samaj not only does man get freedom from all those sinful courses of life of which he becomes conscious in his various cosmic relations but he gets the unique privilege of developing higher forces of higher life and thus evolving noble life in himself.* This is the reason why all the religious creeds and sects, prevalent not only in India but all the world over, bear no comparison at all with the position that the *Dev Dharm* and Dev Samaj occupy in the eyes of those who are acquainted with these facts.

Then O people of this world ! do not remain indifferent to this marvellous and unique work of the Dev Samaj and its founder, which is being done here on this earth before your very eyes, and which is not a fairy tale or a tale of the next world. Consider all these changes and all these achievements which are taking place before you as matters of serious thought and serious concern for yourselves, for, your own highest good lies in this. Do not waste your precious lives because of the bias for this or that creed. Suppose you were

attacked with plague, what would you do to save yourself from death? Would you refuse an efficacious medicine because the person who administers it belongs to this or that creed? Assuredly not. When you are so earnest in saving your body from death, is it possible that you would not run for the safety of your soul to the feet of him, who has given to the world those science-grounded teachings about the true religion and soul-life which none before him had imparted in this world, if for once you come to realise, even to some extent, the beauty and utility of the truths about the life and death of your soul? Is it not reasonable to believe that you would devoutly seek the protection of one who has, by his unique light and power, not only liberated hundreds of souls from various sins and crimes, and evolved, according to their capacity, higher forces of higher life in them, but has given them true knowledge of soul and religion and true religious life—a phenomenon unprecedented in the annals of the entire humanity?

IGNORANCE OF THE WORKING OF FORCE.

In the columns of the *Jiwan Path*—a Hindi monthly of the Dev Samaj, edited by Bhagwan Dev Atma himself—for Shrawan 1965 Bikramiera, an article appeared which throws a new light on the principle of force or power as working in the soul-world. It very lucidly deals with the secret of the marvellous changes wrought in the hearts of hundreds and thousands by the influences of the highest psychic powers of Bhagwan Dev Atma. *As in the physical world, so in the world of soul, it is the power that works a change.* If power is absent its corresponding work of change is also absent. It is the heat that warms our water. No belief in this or that God or any other god or goddess will be able to heat water. It is the food which, when taken and assimilated by us, strengthens us by increasing our vitality. Any belief in this or that God would not produce that strength. Hence, though theists have spared no pains in culminating the fairest name of Bhagwan Dev Atma, denying the presence of unique highest psychic powers in him and attributing all evil deeds to him, yet, because he was in fact the embodiment of the complete and all-sided love of truth and goodness and the complete and all-sided hatred for untruth and wrong, he not only discovered the one true universal system of religion, but gave that truly *Dharmic* foundation to his society which is a wonder of wonders to all unbiased persons.

Why is it that no religious denomination has been able to accept our oft-repeated challenge which we have given to them just to embark on an adventure of making it compulsory for all its members to be free even from the eight specified gross sins which every member of the Dev Samaj has renounced? It is because there is utter absence in these denominations of that highest psychic power which alone can change a wicked heart. The all-powerful God is believed to exist by various theistic denominations. But this all-powerful God does not possess even the very ordinary moral powers by which He could change the hearts of at least those who offer *Namaz* or prayers to Him, perform

Sandhya or *Gayatri* or devote hours together in reading His scriptures, turning beads, repeating His name etc. The fact is that such a being is an absolute fiction. If the theistic denominations have not been able to give any moral foundation to their societies, it is because their founders themselves did not possess those unique psychic forces in their souls which Bhagwan Dev Atma possesses, and thus could not bring about the higher changes which only those powers can.

Let us now give here a free translation of the article as given in Chapter XL of Bhagwan's *Autobiography*, Vol. I:—

The whole universe is charged with force or power. Every force, be it inanimate or animate, inorganic or organic, produces change in various objects and beings and it itself also undergoes a change by its action. It is because of this force that ceaseless change is going on in Nature. This law of change is universal. This change manifests itself only in two ways, *i.e.*, either it evolves an object or a being, or it degenerates it. The evolutionary or constructive change is termed *Vikas* and the dissolutionary or destructive change is termed *Vinash*. The action of force is immutable.

The unique highest psychic forces, which have manifested in the unique soul of Bhagwan Dev Atma, under the operation of the evolutionary process working in Nature, not only constantly operate in his soul but they also move all those who come under their influence and produce a change in them. Thousands of souls have undergone change for the better when they have listened to his sermons, read his writings, basked under his light and power-emitting personality or lived directly in close contact with him. During his discourses or lectures, various kinds of people from the audience have been affected by his influences in various ways. A man who was a slave to his low-loves once said, "Whenever I attended his (Bhagwan's) lectures, I used to undergo an altogether new change. I felt my heart magnetically drawn towards him and curiously overpowered by his influences. When I saw all this, I ran away from the meeting so that I may not be further overpowered by him." True, the working of a real power is inevitable.

The beliefs in the so-called one God or his so-called revealed books, the various imaginary gods or goddesses (*viz.*, Brahma, Vishnu, Durga, Kali, Indra, air, fire, etc.) do not possess the remotest direct or indirect approach or resemblance to these real unique heart-forces. As a steam-engine does not believe in any one God or multitude of gods, but all the same, it moves by the force of steam present in it and draws the wagons, attached to it, hundreds of miles away, and as the Sun without cherishing any belief or worshipping any God, etc., removes the darkness of lakhs of homes by sending its rays of light, and, by the power of its heat, changes huge volumes of water present in oceans, rivers, lakes, tanks, etc., into gaseous form and charges the atmospheric air with its vapours, resulting in clouds, or creates tremendous cyclones

and whirlwinds ; in the same way, Bhagwan Dev Atma produces marvellous changes in the souls of others by the magic influences of his unique higher forces. Many among the God-worshippers do not realise this philosophy of Force or Power. Hence, when Bhagwan Dev Atma realising it to be a huge fiction gave up his belief in God altogether in the year 1894, and applied himself with added zeal to imparting the unique influences of his unique powers, majority of the theists, ignorant of this philosophy of force, failed completely to understand the unreality of their false belief. Many of his opponents among them foolishly asserted that if they were to circulate broadcast the news of Bhagwan Dev Atma's disbelief in God, a strong feeling of repulsion for him would permeate all round and no one would like even to see his face. Nay, they entertained a vain hope that even those who have been drawn to his feet would run away in a body on knowing this fact, and the Dev Samaj would cease to exist, and with the cessation of the work of its founder, the world will be free to continue their false belief and worship of God, to accentuate their soul-darkness and to give a free lance to their low-likes and low-hates to grow wild. Accordingly these God-worshippers began through their preachers, books and papers, etc., to propagate and otherwise circulate all round the news that Bhagwan Dev Atma had given up his belief in God, and hence it was a sin not only to live where he resided but even to see his face. They showed as if they were always very anxious to avoid life of sin and become pure in heart ! How hypocritical all this !! But Nature smiled at the ignorance and hypocrisy of these people. It mutely but eloquently conveyed its grand teaching all round that changes in its broad bosom took place and could take place only by the operation of forces. Wherever some force worked, change was inevitable. This law of change working in Nature was immutable and eternal. Hence the opponents of Bhagwan Dev Atma could not even with their belief in and help of their so-called all-powerful God, stop the unique evolutionary work of his powers. Bhagwan Dev Atma was not a fictitious being like their so-called God. He was a real existing entity and a true *Devta*. He possessed true highest psychic powers. By means of these true powers of his he produced in this true world, day by day, new and marvellous higher changes in the hearts of fit souls. Those who have eyes witness this wonderful work of his powers and feel drawn to him. They accept his refuge and by singing his true glory before others are doing good to themselves and to other fit souls.

Hundreds of men and women who have been changed through the powers of Bhagwan Dev Atma know but too well that, before receiving the unique influences of his unique powers, they could not get rid of the lower courses of their lives even though they believed in one God or multitude of gods and goddesses and were called Brahmos, Aryas, Muslims, Sikhs or Sanatan Dharmies, etc., Nay, in spite of their such beliefs they grew worse and worse in their sinful and lower life. They took flesh and committed several other sins because of the commandment from their so-called God. Their

so-called God or His so-called revealed books, their *gurus* or the so-called voice of their conscience, etc., did not impart to them the light of true *Dharma*. They did not give them any true teachings about the laws of evolution and dissolution of the soul. They did not reveal to them the true conception of what constitutes virtue or vice. They developed no higher consciousness against sin and evolved no higher feeling of character in them. Thus before they assimilated the rays of the unique light and unique power of Bhagwan Dev Atma, their one God or any other god or goddess did neither give them any true light about true *Dharma*, nor produce in their lives any change for the better. In plain words, no God or goddess produced in their hearts that remarkable change for the better which was wrought in their lives by the unique powers of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

This is the personal experience of hundreds of souls. If in the face of all this the believers in the so-called God or fiction-based denominations do not realise the glory of the unique powers of Bhagwan Dev Atma and the unique results of higher changes wrought by them, it is they who are to blame and none else. They have to thank their ignorance or cherished prejudices for all this.

III

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE AND SOUL.

Why is soul-knowledge of extreme necessity and importance to us? Why does soul-knowledge depend fundamentally on the true knowledge of the universal laws of Nature? What unique blessings would accrue to humanity by the true knowledge of the principles relating to soul-life and the fundamental laws of Nature? Why did the knowledge of nature and organism of soul and the laws of its evolution and dissolution, etc., remain a sealed book to entire mankind uptill now? Why is it, that, even after this wonderful and unique knowledge about soul has been discovered and propagated, millions do not appreciate and accept it as a unique blessing? Why is soul-knowledge supreme knowledge for man?

All these questions have been very briefly and lucidly answered by Bhagwan Dev Atma in the Chapter XLII of his *Autobiography* Volume I, a substance whereof we give here for the benefit of all seekers after true soul-knowledge:—

The entire being of man is a part of this vast machinery of the universe. It is as much subject to its eternal and universal processes as any other part of Nature. Hence unless we possess knowledge of these processes of Nature, we cannot get the knowledge of the fundamental principles of soul-life. Again, even if we possess the knowledge of the great truths about the evolutionary and dissolutionary changes as working in the physical as well as spiritual world we cannot gain complete knowledge of the powers comprising the organism of soul. In absence of the knowledge no man does or can even get freedom from the most horrible and harmful meshes of the fiction-grounded and false religious beliefs and systems of the world. Hence no man can be credited with possessing soul-knowledge who is devoid of the knowledge relating to various powers of the organism of his own soul, the motions created by these powers and the good or evil results thereof. Again when the growth and progress of *Dharmic* (religious) or *Adharmic* (irreligious) life in man is the result of the operation of powers of his own soul, how could he get true knowledge about *Dharma* or *Adharma*, so long as he is immersed in darkness about the nature and organism of the soul itself? No, he could not. This is the reason why no founder of any religious system, before Bhagwan Dev Atma's manifestation, whether he claimed to have direct revelation or inspiration from the so-called God or not, could discover the true knowledge of what is *Dharma* and what is *Adharma*. This is the reason why the teachings of these founders are altogether devoid of the basic principles of true *Dharma*. As the laws of various sciences are of universal application for all mankind and are not different for the people of different societies

and creeds; in the same way, all laws or principles relating to what is *Dharma* and what is not *Dharma* based on the evolution and dissolution of the life of soul, are of universal application and they govern all people alike. Being devoid of the knowledge of these universal laws relating to soul-life, the founders of the various fiction-grounded faiths have given different and in certain respects mutually contradictory teachings about them, according to their individual imaginations. Hence the propagation of the true scientific knowledge of the fundamental principles of the universe and the soul-life, would not only enable fit persons gradually to get the most beneficent knowledge of what is true *Dharma* and what it is not, but would also give them freedom from the terrible current of communal animosities, narrow-mindedness, undue hatred, bigotry, fanaticism, persecution, murder, etc., which are prevalent among mankind in the name of religion on account of the soul-darkness and the prevalence of fiction-grounded or blind religious faiths.

There is a journal lying on my table published in America in the month of May, 1907. The name of this journal is *To-morrow*. On the 21st page of this journal, a thinker expresses his views about the science of soul as under :—

“In order to direct one's own mind or that of another a real knowledge of psychology is essential and there has hitherto been no real knowledge of psychology, because that science is based on biology and the co-relation between the two sciences has only been understood in the last few decades—not long enough to make a successful application of its principles to humanity for which several generations will, at the very least, be necessary.”

Now if a sewing machine be kept before a child of four years and he be asked to work this machine and sew the coat that has been cut for him, will the child be able to successfully work the machine and sew his own coat? Never. But what comparison can a sewing machine bear to that most complicated, complexly organised and extremely difficult machinery of soul-organism? Nay, even the highly complex machinery of any railway or other engine would bear not the least comparison to it. For thousands of years, man has been gradually climbing the ladder of progress of civilisation. During this long period, he has made wonderful progress in several branches of science. But still when we look at the knowledge which he possesses, it is really most insignificant. It is very recently that man has acquired some clear knowledge about the universal processes of evolution and dissolution as working in the vast cosmic machinery. It is also very lately that he has gained some true knowledge about the life-power and its gradual evolution. Some time back he did not possess the knowledge of the scientific method of investigation. Even after the discovery of this most essential method, it is only very recently that we have been able to get men—though very few in number—who possess the capacity of successfully applying this method to their researches. Again there is great paucity of such men who possess capacity enough to under-

stand the laws and principles discovered by these scientists. But so far as the truths of all-important science of self or soul are concerned, generally all people—whether literate or illiterate, including even those who pass for learned men—are groping in deep and unrelieved darkness. They possess no true knowledge of the evolution and dissolution of the life of soul. Both the illiterate and the enlightened people are bond slaves to various false faiths, superstitious creeds and fancy tales. As no worshipper of the imaginary goddess “Kali” is prepared to put his deity to the direct test of experimental interrogation, in the same way, no worshipper of any “God,” *Khuda* or *Ishwara*, etc., is prepared to examine his existence by direct test. They both believe soul to be immortal, when, in fact, soul is a name of the highly evolved and complex form of the same life-power which in its primitive stages is found in unicellular existences, and this (*i.e.*, the latter) again in its own time has evolved from the inorganic force in Nature. It can be very clearly shown by experiment that life-power admits of death. But even such most evident truths which conflict with the cherished beliefs of man in general, whether literate or illiterate, are not considered by him worthy of that regard which he bestows on the fictitious, imaginary and blind faiths which he has fondly cherished. When this is the mental state of man in general in this age of science, one can imagine what must have been the mental state of mankind centuries or thousands of years back.

“Then what an enormous ignorance those men betray who having adopted a policy of insincerity or false belief, in order to attain their object of earthly power or *raj*, and who, being ignorant of the true knowledge of the great law of evolution in Nature, declare that in comparison with the learned and scientific minds of our own times, those primitive people who lived in the infancy of humanity were better informed and more enlightened!! It is true that a desire for self-knowledge was manifested by one or other person on this earth even centuries ago, but, as already mentioned, they were born in times when all those conditions which could accomplish this desire were totally absent. For instance, knowledge of the complete method of scientific investigation did not dawn before Bacon, nor did the knowledge of the power of steam appear before Stephenson. Now before they appeared, no one possessed the requisite hereditary mental equipment like them, or found either suitable environment for the manifestation of that knowledge (and both these conditions could not in conformity with the law of evolution come into being before their proper time). In the same way, no knowledge of the nature and organism of soul, its evolution and dissolution, and *Dharm*, and *Adharm*, etc., which dawned on Bhagwan Dev Atma, could and did dawn on humanity before his advent.

“*For man soul-knowledge is the supreme knowledge, because in absence of this knowledge, he is neither able to protect his being from the ravages of lower life, nor evolve higher life in himself. How can then an unbiased seeker after his soul-welfare fail to appreciate the*

blessings of those great principles of soul-life which Bhagwan Dev Atma has discovered and which are incomparably more precious than all the riches, acquisitions and possessions of this mundane world? None would excel the proud privilege and blessedness of one who has been able to realise them in their true perspective.....”

The above article of Bhagwan clearly shows how ardently he felt the necessity of soul-knowledge and soul-welfare for humanity. Why would a man ignorant of this unique soul-knowledge struggle to get freedom from soul-darkness in order to save his soul from the terrible soul-maladies? If one possesses no knowledge of the nature of soul and its maladies, known as low-loves and low-hates, which besides setting him against even his dearest kith and kin and making him guilty of various sins and crimes (which bring for him the rich harvest of pains, agonies and miseries), vitiate his own vitality and draw him more and more to the abysmal brink of total annihilation, why would one struggle to get free from them? If one possesses no knowledge of all those higher powers of soul which when evolved not only save him from lot of miseries due to the slavery to low-loves and low-hates, but which, besides enabling him to taste the fruits of higher happiness, increase the constructive power of his soul and thus make him more and more beautiful, healthy, strong and blessed as a soul, why would he get earnest to evolve them in his soul? It is this terrible ignorance about soul-knowledge which is not only keeping mankind contented with absolutely false faiths, but which leads them to low, false and, in millions of cases, most harmful ideals of life, and thus not only robs them of true higher happiness and higher life, but makes them sink lower and lower into the mire of darkness, degeneration and ultimate extinction of their entire being.

How precious, necessary and most vital is it then to seek and possess true knowledge of those wondrous principles relating to the soul-life which Bhagwan Dev Atma has discovered and propagated in the world!

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES RELATING TO UNIVERSE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma saw and realised that it was impossible for any man to get true and complete knowledge of life in general and specially about soul-life of man, without, in the first instance, gaining true knowledge of the fundamental principles of the universe, because man's entire existence, being a part of the universe, was very intimately and closely bound up with the universe by various ties of relationship. This was the reason why Bhagwan Dev Atma continued to obtain true knowledge of the universe along with his main task of unearthing truths about the soul-life of man. After long, continuous and laborious study and profound reflection, he discovered that the basic principles whether of the whole universe or of the human-world were fundamentally the same. Having realised this truth, he contributed an article in his Hindi journal *Jiwan Path* for Jaishth, Sambat 1962-B, touching the four fundamental principles of the universe. We translate them here :—

1. PRINCIPLE OF COMPOSITION.

Nature or cosmos is the name of all visible or invisible things that exist on this earth upon which we live, in the atmosphere surrounding it, in the whole solar system of which it is a part, and in the innumerable other such solar systems located in the unlimited space of the universe.

Nature is composed of only two kinds of things, namely matter and force. For instance, gold, silver, copper, iron, stone, clay, coal, water, air, etc., are material things, and that thing which binds their particles and maintains their form *i.e.*, cohesion, and besides that heat, light, etc., are all forces.

The ancients considered that elements of matter were only four or five and they named them as clay, water, air, fire and the fifth one sky or empty space. The *Pandits* of our own country called them five elements (*Panch bhuts*). But this belief of theirs was not correct. The scientists of to-day have, after making scientific analysis, found that water which our ancients considered to be an element, is a chemical compound made up of two elements. In the same way, fire or heat is not an element, but it is a force. After making chemical analysis these scientists have found out more than seventy elements up to now (*i.e.*, 1909.) For instance, oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, sulphur, chlorine, potassium, sodium, iron, mercury, gold, silver, lead, etc.

Matter assumes various states, such as :—

- (1) *Solid*—like iron, stone, coal, etc.
- (2) *Liquid*—as water, oil, mercury, etc.
- (3) *Gaseous*—like oxygen, hydrogen, etc.
- (4) *Etherial*—as ether and ethron.

No element or other material thing exists without force. Force and matter are inseparably bound up, *i.e.*, one cannot exist without the other. They are indestructible. In their totality they neither increase nor decrease but always remain constant. Those who ascribe any separate creator such as God etc., to this universe, labour under a mere delusion.

2. PRINCIPLE OF RELATIONSHIP.

Nature is one organised whole, composed of mutually inter related parts. As all the organs of man form part of his body, in the same way, all kingdoms of Nature are closely connected with it as its organs.

The four kingdoms in which we can divide universe are as follows :—

- (1) Mineral world, (2) Vegetable world, (3) Animal world, (4) Human world.

All these four kingdoms are related to one another much in the same way as the roots of a tree are related to its trunk, the trunk is

related to its branches, and the branches are related to its leaves and fruit, etc.

The mineral world is the root or the foundation from which the other three kingdoms, i.e., vegetable, animal and human have evolved.

The forms or bodies of all existences in the vegetable, animal and human worlds are made up of oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, etc. It is the force or energy of the inorganic world which has gradually evolved into life-power and this life-power has again assumed in the course of its evolution "countless forms in the vegetable, animal and human worlds. The vegetable existences possess the capacity of assimilating various mineral substances and converting them into living cells. The animal and human existences subsist (directly or indirectly) on these vegetable existences and air and water, etc. As a tree grows out of the seed, in the same way, all these three higher kingdoms have sprung from the mineral world. They are all bound up with one another by closest of ties. The interrelation of all these organs is called the principle of relationship.

3. PRINCIPLE OF CHANGE.

All motion in various existences of the universe is caused by the attractive and repulsive action of its force. All the four kingdoms of the universe and all the existences included in them are always in motion in themselves as well as in their mutual relations. Owing to this constant motion the entire universe is undergoing ceaseless change. There is no existence whether living or non-living in the universe that is not constantly changing. It is motion that is always changing everything. This motion changes every being relatively for the better or for the worse. The relatively evolved state of a being is called its higher or upward change, while the relatively degenerated state is called its lower or downward change.

When a being gets degenerated from its previous good state by the lower change such a change is termed *Vinash* or dissolution. If this lower change, continues unchecked in a being, it gradually deteriorates more and more till it becomes altogether extinct as regards its individual existence. The following two instances would illustrate this principle of dissolution :—

1. Put a piece of cloth in fire. It would begin to gradually lose its form and if it is kept continually burning, it would be wholly destroyed in a while. It would then cease to be a piece of cloth.

2. When a man or animal dies, its gross body, after being cast off by its life-power, begins to gradually fester and decay till it becomes extinct altogether. The previous form of the body disappears completely.

Any relation which degenerates or destroys an existence is called its lower or *dissolutionary relation*. And all the ties which bind it to that relation are called lower or degenerating ties.

In the same way, when any existence undergoes higher change and begins to grow better than its previous state, this change is called its *Vikas* or evolution. When any existence having established its relation with any other existence grows better and higher, that relation is called a higher or evolutionary relation for it. All ties which keep it bound to that relation are called higher or evolutionary ties.

4. PRINCIPLE OF HARMONY OR SUPREME GOAL.

Nature and its different kingdoms are said to evolve in direct proportion to the predominance of higher changes in them over the lower ones. And higher harmony is established in Nature to the extent to which this evolutionary change takes place in it. The grand ideal of supreme harmony is being realised more or less according to the higher evolution that is taking place in all the various kingdoms of Nature.

As the health of body and the mutual good of its organs is promoted according to the extent of harmony that prevails in its organs, in the same way, the cause of goodness is promoted in the universe to the extent this higher harmony is established anywhere or in any relation.

All these four great principles are accepted by science and they are eternal.

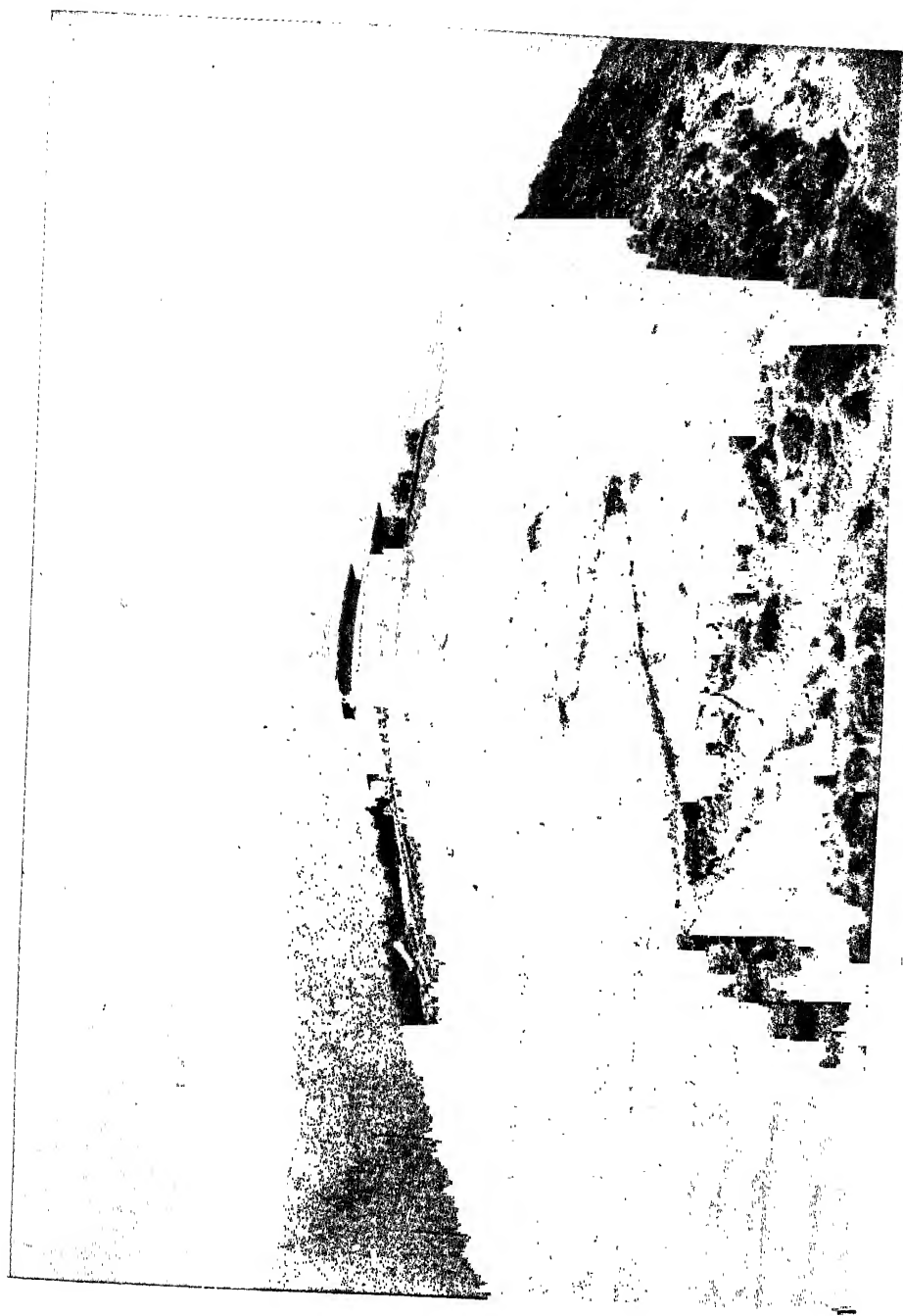
THE MOST STIFF AND EXACTING INVESTIGATION IN THE DOMAIN OF SOUL AND ITS BRILLIANT RESULTS.

It was in the year 1894 that Bhagwan Dev Atma renounced God-belief (which he had cherished for years) as a huge fiction. After that, by four years of deep study, profound reflection and great mental struggles and heart shocks, he discovered the four great principles given above which opened to him the true foundation for the science-grounded system of religion. But though Bhagwan Dev Atma discovered the unshakable foundation of the true universal religion, the superstructure still remained to be built upon. How Bhagwan Dev Atma felt when he carried on this most momentous work of discovering the detailed truths and facts of the entire inner machinery or soul-life of man is very briefly described in chapter XLIV of his *Autobiography* Volume I. A substance of that is given below :—

“The success which had crowned my efforts so far in this most difficult investigation was indeed unique. I felt abundantly blessed on obtaining the rich treasure of these fundamental truths. My soul too evolved still higher. I got very good material for writing very briefly the fundamental principles for the first part of the *Dev Shastra*. The path for writing the second part relating to the philosophy of man was also opened to some extent before me. But after that I felt my way blocked up. I realised that the task of knowing, in full and complete details, the various psychic powers that had evolved up to now in man and classifying them into

different groups, was far more taxing than all that I had previously undertaken. Oh! how helpless do I feel to convey adequately in word an idea of this highly difficult task. My condition can be compared to some extent to that of an explorer of the highest summit of the Himalayas. He sees a high peak before him and thinks that that might be the highest, and that, on reaching it, he would have an end to his great travels. He hastens to reach it. He stumbles and falls but again rises and climbs it, till all worn and exhausted, he succeeds in climbing it. As soon as he reaches it, he feels some mental relief by considering his great task to be fully achieved. But when he begins to look further, he finds to his dismay that the summit, he had believed to be the end of his journey, was not the highest. He sees before him another higher peak. Looking at that, his heart seems to sink. His condition would be simply unspeakable, if this drama is enacted in his explorations not once but a number of times. I had also to pass through any number of such heart-breaking disappointments. After long and arduous struggles when I noted down the details of the psychic powers of man and their different functions, and classified them accordingly, I naturally felt a great relief, for I considered that my task was done. But after some time new light dawned on me. I saw in that new light several defects in my already systematised line of work. Then I felt that all my previous toils and work had gone waste, and naturally I became somewhat disappointed. Such experiences did not assail me once or twice or for one or two years, but I had to experience them many a time and for several years. Though this drama which Nature enacted in my life was natural enough, yet nevertheless it inflicted many severe heart-shocks and disappointments on me. But though I used to feel my heart sore, I could not give up the research. I had to tread the path to my destination only that way. There was no other way for me but to push on in my struggles owing to my deep and inextinguishable love and to never cry halt till the beloved was found. It mattered little when, how and where that beloved could be got. But it had become imperative for me to go on searching it till it was found. Such a search till the goal was reached was essentially for my very life, very existence and very breath. Without it I could neither find satisfaction nor peace of mind. There was no other cure for this love of my soul excepting the securing of the beloved. Hence the more my beloved receded from me, the greater became my zest to run after it. I was sure to find it one day and make it my own. My love was absolutely pure and true. The following couplet mirrored the condition of my heart and hence described it eminently well :—

“असर है जजुवे उल्फत में, तो खिचकर आही जायेंगे;
हमें परवाह नहीं इस की, अगर बह दूर बैठे हैं।”



Translation.—If there is any power in the passion of true love, the beloved would feel drawn and come to me. It matters little how far away is my beloved sitting.

The apparent failure in my efforts every time brought me, in fact, nearer to my beloved—the goddess of success. And ultimately I got her and it became mine.

All the papers on which I have, from time to time, taken rough notes and written my reflections, though not preserved in full, form, even in their incomplete state at this time, a huge pile.....”

It was the attainment of this great goal which enabled Bhagwan Dev Atma to write out, for the highest good of humanity, those wonderful truths about nature and soul which are given at the end of Volume I of his *Autobiography* and a free translation of which shall form the subject matter of our subsequent chapters of this volume. These represented the first completed task of Bhagwan Dev Atma's labours. And we give them here in their original form as a chapter in the record of the history of Bhagwan Dev Atma's life and labours. But this was not the last and final fruit of his great labours. Bhagwan could never cry halt. His progress could never be impeded or stopped. With the progress of his unique light, he several times revised his achieved truths. The first edition of *Dev Shastra*—a scripture containing his unique teachings—underwent most radical change when the second edition was published and altogether new form was given to that same *Dev Shastra* when in the later and closing portion of his earthly life, Bhagwan published its third edition. The third edition was published in parts. The third part relating to philosophy of man contains over 600 pages and was completed only a few short months before his departure from this earth for *Dev Lok*.

IV

THE "DEV SHASTRA."

Before we deal with the philosophic and scientific conclusions and principles which Bhagwan Dev Atma discovered and embodied at the end of his *Autobiography*, Volume I, it is very necessary to give here some idea of the most sacred scripture of Bhagwan's highest philosophy and conduct which he endowed the world with. The writing of this great scripture, Bhagwan Dev Atma commenced at Montgomery when he had gone there for change of climate in 1894 to recover his failing health. Bhagwan devoted many years to the writing of this scripture before he published it for the first time. An article about it was published in the Baisakh 1965-B issue of the journal *Jiwan Path*, a greater portion of which is freely translated below :—

WHAT IS DEV SHASTRA ?

This is a scripture which contains the true, highest and supreme harmony-producing and blessed teachings about the one, true and universal *Dharma* for all mankind, called the *Dev Dharma*.

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF THIS ?

The founder of the Dev Samaj, Bhagwan Dev Atma, is the author of this book or scripture.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE DEV DHARMA ?

The word *Dev* is derived from the root *Dib* which means lustre, brilliance, illumination or light. The word *Dharma* means (higher) conduct (*Subhav*) or higher life. Hence *Dev Dharma* means the illumined higher life. In other words it means "देवस्व धर्मः स देव धर्मः" i.e., The highest psychic life manifested in and lived by the Dev Atma is *Dev Dharma*.

WHO IS THE DEV ATMA ?

The Dev Atma is the name of that unique soul whose inner organism has attained completeness by the evolution in it of the highest psychic forces or *Dev Shakties* of the ideal life (or *Dev Jiwan*) which has manifested itself in him in the course of evolution on this earth of the life-power which went on for hundreds of thousands of years.

The book in which the Dev Atma has embodied in a systematised form and for the highest good of all fit persons of this world, all those universal fundamental truths which he has seen and discovered in his unique light, emitted by the highest powers of his unique ideal life—truths regarding the organism of man, the evolution and

dissolution or the constructive and destructive courses of the human soul, the ties which bind him in various cosmic relations, the true and false religion, true salvation and highest evolution of man's soul-life, and several religious exercises in various relations intended to help the evolution of higher life in him—is called the *Dev Shashtra*. In short, *Dev Shashtra* is that true religious book in which the highest teachings and life of Bhagwan Dev Atma are propounded.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE "DEV SHASTRA" AND THEIR UNIQUENESS.

This world possesses many so-called religious books which, instead of being known and believed to be man-made, are believed to be God-revealed or God-made (that is their origin is supposed to be due to an imaginary being called God). And there are many people who do not in their heart of hearts consider these books to be God-made, yet they insincerely profess them to be so made. The founder of the *Dev Dharm* teaches that as a jug of brass or a bowl of silver, wherever and whenever found, whether lying on the ground or dug up from beneath it, whether bearing the inscription of its maker or not, whether the time of its manufacture is known or not, is surely *taken to be the hand-work of man and man alone*; in the same way, any scripture which may be found anywhere, in any language, whether it bears the name of its author or authors or not, whether the time and age of its composition could be found out or not, *cannot but be the composition of man and man alone*.

Then again, a book does not become valuable because it is believed to be composed *not* by man, *but* as revealed or inspired or communicated through some angel by the so-called God; much in the same way, as the fatal poison of the deadly snakes cannot be considered valuable or good for food, merely because an imaginary God is said to be the author of snakes. *A book or scripture is to be judged on the merit of the teachings it contains*, and not on the basis of some hoary cherished false belief or superstition. The *Dev Shashtra* owes its merit to the glory and uniqueness of those wonderful truths and principles which are embodied in it and which are not found in any religious book or scripture alleged to have been given by the so-called God. If one has got some longing to acquire the light of true knowledge about one's own precious existence and has to gain some true knowledge of the lower and higher courses of soul-life and their fruits, he can find by the unfailing method of direct experiment whether such teachings as are given in the *Dev Shashtra* can be found in any other book, whether composed by man or given by the so-called God. But so long as humanity is merged in utter darkness about the knowledge relating to its very existence, and so long as man whether literate or illiterate, civilised, or uncivilised, possesses no knowledge of the various courses of his life, and does not realise what is meant by the degenerating courses of soul-life and its higher or constructive courses, no other knowledge or learning can be of much avail to him specially when he remains blind to the ceaseless law of change

working every moment on his whole existence and is unaware of the ultimate end to which the operation of this law is leading his soul-life. In fact it is not possible for any soul to get that true knowledge without receiving *Dev Joti*, and in absence of that unique divine higher *Dev Joti* it is impossible for him to realise the incalculable merit of the *Dev Shastra* which it possesses above all the books of the world including the so-called religious books, though said to be given by the so-called God.

THE STRIKING EXPRESSION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE "DEV SHASTRA."

As the teachings of the *Dev Shastra* are unique, so its expression in language also is not less unique. Its authorship has taken many years. When the discovery of an astronomical or geographical truth takes a scientist years of most strenuous and patient labours, what labours, struggles and difficulties Bhagwan Dev Atma must have passed through in search after and discovery of the most abstruse and complex truths and exercises relating to soul-life, and what labours he must have gone through to couch them in language can better be imagined than described. When ordinarily a man is not able to correctly understand and describe an outside object or natural phenomenon which he has perceived with his own eyes or other sense organs, or correctly write down one or other principle which he has learnt from others; nay, when one cannot express in correct and proper words even a phenomenon which he has seen several times with his own eyes; how hard, uphill and extremely difficult a work it must have been for Bhagwan to express these abstruse truths which he discovered, specially when the language in which he had to couch and express them is so poor that one is unable to find adequate words fully expressive of the meanings and idea of the truths and the feelings which he wants to convey through them; and still more when he has to describe them as briefly and yet as clearly as possible. Moreover the task becomes still more irksome when the subject matter, he has to write down, has no bearing and similarity to the matter contained in the so-called God-given scriptures, which are either full of children's tales or of prayers by the worldly and sensual-happiness-loving people for gold, silver, cows, horses, cattle, etc. The whole *Dev Shastra* is divided into several main parts, everyone of which is necessary to complete the whole organism of the true *Dharma*. And all parts are so composed of various sub-divisions, that each one bears closest possible relation to every other and, like the organs of the body, are not only interrelated but are contributory to the same higher purpose or object of the book. The *Dev Shastra* therefore possesses uniqueness not only for its true religious teachings, but for the striking classification in which these teachings have been arranged, and the art of authorship....."

We shall now deal with those wonderful truths about cosmos, soul-life, life after death, etc., which Bhagwan Dev Atma discovered up to 1909 and couched them in briefest possible words and in

the most expressive style, and the knowledge of which is bound to illumine our minds and elevate our hearts.

SCIENCE-GROUNDED AND PHILOSOPHIC TRUTHS.

The science-grounded and philosophic right conclusions or truths which Bhagwan Dev Atma declared and published at the end of his *Autobiography*, Volume I, in 1909 for the first time after he discovered the unique system of true religion are translated below as a historic record of his life, though several of them were afterwards improved upon or changed by his further experience and progress :—

ABOUT COSMOS.

1. Nature is one, *i.e.*, its various divisions or kingdoms and all the multifarious objects or existences in them are not totally independent of or separate from and unconnected with one another, but they are related with and dependent upon each other and are hence component parts or members of the one whole.

2. Nature is composed of two distinct kinds of substances. One of these is called *Matter* and the other is called *Force*.

3. The ponderable substance (substance having weight) is called matter and the imponderable substance (that having no weight) is called force. Both these possess quite distinct or demarcable characteristics. Both of these were never at any time one, nor would they ever be one, *i.e.*, neither the force can be transformed into matter, nor matter can ever be transformed into force.

4. Force and matter are inseparably bound up. They never exist separately or independently of each other but eternally exist together.

5. Matter exists in several states or forms,* such as solid, liquid, gaseous and etherial. Ether being the most subtle, is all-pervading.

6. Material substances are composed of minute particles or molecules. Under the action of force they are always in a state of vibration. This state of vibration produces various kinds of long or short waves in them.

NOTE.—The waves of the air are the medium for conveying sound. Ether is the medium for conveying light, and this and still finer etherial waves are the mediums for conveying vibrations of thought or feelings.

7. Force manifests itself in two ways, *i.e.*, attraction and repulsion. By its own action force changes itself and assumes newer states; it changes the matter as well, producing newer and newer forms therefrom.

8. In consequence of the perpetual action of the force the whole Nature is eternally in a ceaseless state of change. None of its divisions or the countless existences in them is immune from this change. This grand process of change in Nature is eternal and all-pervading.

*Note.—Clay, stone, coal, iron, copper, etc., are solid; water, oil, etc., are liquids; air, oxygen, hydrogen, etc., are gases; and those subtler than these have the etherial state.

*NOTE.—Force and matter under the operation of the eternal and ceaseless law of change have, by their mutual action, evolved besides other countless worlds, our grand solar system including our earth and all the countless kinds of vegetable, animal, human and inorganic existences on this earth. But as countless worlds and living organisms are always coming into being under the operation of this eternal law of change, so are they also deteriorating and becoming extinct as individual forms under the operation of the same law.

9. Under the operation of this eternal process of change in Nature, while some of its constituent parts on going the upward course assume higher or evolved forms, some others on going the downward course assume lower or degenerated forms. As a result of both these courses while some parts or existences are brought into being, some become destroyed; while some are improving, the others are degenerating; while some are evolving, the others are dissolving or dying.

10. When any existence, going the upward course, assumes higher or better form than before, it is said to be evolving. But when any existence, going the downward course, assumes lower or worse form than before or loses itself altogether, it is said to be degenerating or dissolving.

11. Matter and force do certainly change their forms or actions but none of them is ever totally destroyed *i.e.*, they are in their very nature indestructible. Hence this Nature is eternal.

NOTE —Nature is not at all created or made by any so-called *Khuda*, God, *Ishwara*, etc. Those therefore who believe that any so-called God has made or created this Nature cherish a false and mythical faith.

12. Force and matter are inseparably bound up. It is the mutual action and reaction of these two substances which is the one true fundamental cause of the manifestation and disappearance of all the millions upon millions of forms or existences of the inorganic, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms. There is no other ultimate primeval or the first cause of these existences besides that.

13. Higher or upward and lower or downward change in any living or non-living existence depends upon the following conditions :—

- (1) Its capacity for change.
- (2) Its environment or surrounding circumstances.
- (3) Its relation with its surrounding conditions or environment by means of certain uniting tie or ties.
- (4) Their mutual influences upon each other.

14. If any (living or non-living) being is bound up with its surrounding conditions or environment with such ties of relationship which lead it to downward or degenerating course, those ties or links are called degenerating or lower ties. But if it assumes upward or higher state by means of them, then such ties of relationship are said to be higher ones.

15. When any existence by uniting with its environmental conditions tends to the downward or lower course, such environment is called unfavourable and hence dissolutionary environment for it ;

but when any environment produces higher or upward change in it, it is said to be favourable, and hence evolutionary environment for it.

16. Various existences in Nature on getting favourable environment and forming evolutionary relation with it, attain to higher and higher or more constructive states; while others that come under the sway of unfavourable environment and form lower or dissolutionary relation with it, degenerate from their previous higher state and assume lower or degraded state.

ABOUT MAN.

[*His life-force.*]

1. The force which is present in all the various living material forms and which manifests itself by various activities of life is called (organised) life-force.

2. This organised life-power or life-force builds its own living body, sustains it by assimilating food, moves it, and procreates its own type. This life-force is therefore, distinguished by distinct characteristics, *i.e.*, (1) Body-building, (2) Body-sustaining, (3) Body-moving, and (4) Procreating characteristics.

NOTE.—In all its various body-building and body-moving activities, the organised life-power displays some elementary or preliminary consciousnesses.

3. The elementary or the lowest kind of living forms in which the life-force at first manifested itself on this earth in water, millions of years ago, are called monera.

NOTE.—The monera are so minute that they are visible only under a microscope.

The size of these minute living organisms ranges from $\frac{1}{2500}$ to $\frac{1}{7000}$ th part of an inch.

These bloodless, boneless and organless elementary organisms are merely incomplete unicellular living forms.

These are of two types (1) Protophytes and (2) Protozoa.* The first draw their sustenance from inanimate or inorganic substances, while the second subsist on the first. The second type owes its origin to the first.

The organisms of the first type which are like very minute globules are homogeneous in their entire construction.

Some of these have, under favourable conditions, evolved into one complete cellular type, *i.e.*, some of their central part has hardened and the outer part has remained soft like the organisms of the first type. The hardened central portion is called nucleus and the outer soft portion is called the covering.

4. These complete unicellular organisms have under favourable conditions progressed and evolved into multicellular forms, and, undergoing further changes both in their bodies and their inner capabilities, have, gradually in the long course of evolution, produced

*The germs of various diseases such as plague, cholera, tuberculosis, etc., which are also called bacteria are instances of these types.

all the millions of small and big vegetable and animal existences. In the course of the further evolution of animals continuing for long ages, man appeared on this earth with its highly organised body and life-force or soul.

NOTE.—There is no other builder or maker of living plants, animals, and human beings save their own organised life-power. It is wrong to believe that any so-called God or any other supposed god or goddess builds or makes any of them.

[*Organism of the human soul.*]

5. The soul of man is comprised of various powers which in the case of an ordinary man can be divided into the following classes or groups:—

(1) Body-building and body-protecting powers.

(2) Primary senses, such as of sight, of hearing, of smelling, of taste, of touch, etc.

(3) Desire (*Basna*) forces, such as the desire to live, desire to get free from pain, misery and death, desire for tasteful things, for fragrant smells, for hearing beautiful songs or melodies, desire to get property praise, desire for sexual intercourse etc., etc.

(4) Passions (*Utejana*) such as anger, jealousy, vindictiveness, *Hinsa* or feeling of violence, etc.

(5) Egoistic forces (*Ahang Shakties*) such as hypocrisy, vanity, self-will, obstinacy, stuck up pride, showiness, etc.

*(6) Intellectual forces (*Mansik Shakties*), i.e., space and time consciousnesses, æsthetic consciousness, perception, conception, memory, imagination, language, reasoning, etc.

These powers are not found in equal number and equal strength in all men but they vary both in quantity and quality in various human beings. These six groups of powers that have manifested themselves in the life-force or soul of man do not complete the soul-organism. They leave it in a very incomplete form. Besides these six groups of powers, there are some persons who have evolved in greater or less number and strength one other group of forces, called *Satwik* or altruistic powers. Thus a seventh *kosh* or group consisting of reverence, sympathy, gratefulness, mercy, sense of justice, honesty, sense of duty, etc., is also found in some persons. Higher than this is another group of forces called *Dev Kosh*. It is this highest group of highest psychic forces which, on the one hand, renders the organism of soul complete and, on the other, gives to it all the forces of the seventh group in their complete form.

6. The soul-organism and body of man are inseparably connected. Both are indispensably necessary in order to complete the existence of man. None of them can exist apart from the other. Just as the body of man does not live when the soul leaves it but begins to decay and ultimately loses that individual and

*This classification has been materially changed and improved in later writings.

separate form altogether, in the same way, if after leaving the gross body, the soul is not able to build a new finer body for itself, it also loses its individuality and regresses into inorganic force.

NOTE.—For the preservation and continuance of the existence of soul, its connection with living body (gross or refined) is as essential and indispensable, as is the existence of life-force or power in a living body both essential and indispensable for its preservation and continuance.

7. Under the operation of the universal law of change, the inner organisation of the life-power or soul of man changes much in the same way, as his outer tabernacle or body changes under its operation.

8. In consequence of this eternal process of change in the universe all existences belonging either to plant, animal or human kingdoms possess their own different individualities and differ from one another in their individual forms and qualities. Hence they are in different lower or higher states. Millions of human souls that exist are different from one another on account of their higher or lower, noble or ignoble life.

NOTE.—Thus the belief cherished by the *Vedantists* that one soul of *Brahm* who is all-good and all-pervading lives in all the millions of different human bodies and that human soul is merely a part of the same *Brahm* is absolutely erroneous. The fact is exactly the other way. In reality all the the millions of human bodies are inhabited by individually different souls, quite distinguishable from one another, and are therefore millions in number. While the soul-organism of one is complete, there are million others who are comparatively more incomplete in their organism and millions others still more incomplete. Some are in lower state while others are in still lower one. Some are good, while others are in better state, i.e., they are all in different stages and states.

9. In consequence of the eternal law of change a human soul attains to or evolves higher life in himself to the extent of his own hereditary capacity and the outer favourable environment which he gets for its development. But if one is born with the heredity of complete psychic forces capable of evolving the highest soul-life and acquires continuous favourable environment to evolve them he can attain to the life immortal.*

10. The soul which is incapable of exhibiting or evolving powers of higher life in itself, naturally takes to the downward or degenerating course of life, and if it continues unchecked, it gradually becomes extinct as a human personality.

NOTE.—The belief that each and every soul is immortal, is cherished by millions of persons who are, on the one hand, ignorant of the above great truth, and, on the other, are highly desirous of living for ever, though immersed in various superstitions. Such a belief is totally wrong.

11. In every living human being, his own life-power or soul is the most important and most essentially real thing. Its preservation means the preservation of his being and its extinction spells the extinction of his entire personality. If this life-power or soul of man is able to live and possess different consciousnesses, he not only satisfies his natural, true and intense yearning for living, but can also be capable of enjoying various kinds of higher happinesses according to his inner condition.

*This view of Bhagwan was afterwards changed as will be seen further on—
(Compiler.)

But if he loses his soul, his entire existence grows extinct and, along with it, his natural desire for getting happiness and even his capacity of enjoying it, is altogether lost.

12. *The primary and the highest object or goal of every human being is the preservation of his soul, i.e., to get freedom from the slavery of all his lower powers and the accumulated impurities resulting therefrom, and to develop the evolutionary powers of higher life or Dharmic forces in it.*

[*Right and wrong courses of man and their consciousness.*]

13. Any kind of mental activity of man in relation to any living or non-living being is termed *thought*, while his every bodily or outer expression in their relation is called a *deed* or *conduct* or *behaviour*.

14. Various feelings of man alone are the basic cause or true motive forces of all his good or bad thoughts, or good or bad actions. Hence a man who is destitute of a certain feeling-force, will not be able to manifest any activity which is prompted by that feeling.

NOTE.—For instance, a man destitute of the feeling of compassion or mercy is incapable of thinking out ways and means and doing any practical deed in order to remove the pain, anguish or misery, etc., of any animal or man out of purely unselfish motives and without any admixture of *Basna* or selfish desire. On the contrary, such a man sometimes feels no scruple whatsoever in inflicting pain or misery on any man or animal or even putting an end to their life, simply for his own gratification. A man possessed of *Hinsa Bhav* (or cruel propensity) in order to satisfy this wicked propensity destroys many innocent lives. A man who is led by the low-love of money cheats, commits theft, suppresses deposits, takes bribes and does various other wrong acts. A man possessed of the feeling of jealousy gets miserable when any other man is more praised even for his real good qualities and wishes him ill. So on and so forth.

15. Being wrongly or improperly led by his various lower desire-forces, passions, egoistic tendencies and mental powers, man inevitably adopts various kinds of downward courses of life and thinks wrong thoughts and does wrong deeds in connection with various cosmic relations, and thus very materially vitiates or harms his life-force or soul. For instance :—

(1) Impelled by pleasure-affording *Basnas* (lower desires), he is led to adopt various downward courses of life in connection with various cosmic relations in order to gratify them (*i.e.*, he is led to cherish wrong thoughts and commit wrong deeds). He thus grows degenerated and besides injuring various other existences, he does incalculable harm to his own existence.

(2) Being a slave to various lower passions and in order to gratify them, he is led to cherish wrong thoughts and commit wrong acts in relation to the various kingdoms of the universe, and thereby he, not only harms other existences, but very substantially injures his own existence also.

(3) Being a bond slave to egoistic feelings and impelled to gratify them, he cherishes wrong thoughts and commits wrong acts in relation to various existences and thus inflicts very great injury on his own existence also.

(4) Being a bond slave to imagination-based various false beliefs and wrong superstitions, he eventually adopts wrong courses of conduct in relation to various divisions of the universe and consequently does immense harm to his own being.

16. Though all the right and wrong urges arise out of the feelings of man's own heart, yet it is a fact that souls of this or the next world also do or can some times prove helpful in exciting them.

NOTE.—Besides these real beings, no imaginary being called God or satan is the cause of these right or wrong urges in man. Hence the belief in the so-called God's voice through conscience is purely a myth.

17. So long as a man does not evolve real consciousness of the relatively superior importance and value of his *soul* as compared with his *body* and other things of the world, he remains absolutely unconscious of what contributes to the highest interest of or the greatest injury to his soul-life; and being under the sway of his pleasure-affording or pain-producing low desires and low passions, etc., he spends his entire life in their gratification. Such a man does not feel the least true desire either for getting free from his lower or degeneration-producing forces or for evolving higher forces of higher life in his soul.

18. A soul who does not possess to a sufficient degree any higher consciousness or higher sense, about what is right and what is wrong in a certain respect in relation to one's own self or to others, cannot in the nature of things have *direct* knowledge of what is good or evil in that respect. In such a state, he cannot but base his ideas or beliefs about good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, etc., on his own imagination or inference or on superstitions and false beliefs which he acquires from others.

19. The knowledge which a man acquires through his own imagination or inference or through traditions and beliefs prevalent among others about what is right or wrong, good or bad, virtuous or vicious, beneficent or sinful, can sometimes be correct and sometimes incorrect. This is the reason why there are different and in many cases absolutely opposed or contradictory teachings prevalent among various so-called religions of the world with regard to what is true or false, good or evil, virtue or vice. And the result is that what one religion holds to be a sin, another religious system not only does not hold it a sin but holds it to be a positive virtue.

NOTE.—Even among the believers of the so-called All-good God, we find mutually contradictory commandments about good and evil deeds as having been given or revealed by Him. God is a pure creation of man's imagination. There is therefore no wonder if the founders of various faiths possessing various and different temperaments declared, in the name of God, different, nay mutually opposed, teachings about virtue and vice, good or evil.

20. Save and except the Dev Atma—the manifestation of ideal soul-life—who, in the course of cosmic evolution, has developed in his unique soul all the various complete consciousnesses or highest senses of directly perceiving or knowing what is truly good or right and evil or wrong or untrue in all relations with the various living and non-living kingdoms of the universe, none else, be he a

man or the so-called God or any other—could impart true knowledge and consciousness of what is in reality virtue or vice, truth or falsehood, right or wrong.

[The good and bad influences of environments.]

21. Like all other living and non-living existences man too emanates subtle or fine particles of one or other kind every moment. These emanations resemble smoke and have good or bad effect according to the good or bad nature of the man from whom they emanate.

22. These good or bad very fine particles that emanate from the being of man are diffused in the air around him and permeate the walls of the house, the clothes and various other such things, and the other men, animals, plants, etc., whether living or non-living, and exert their good or evil influence on them, as the case may be, to the extent that they are assimilated by them according to their capacity for attracting them.

23. Just as the material particles coming out of a fragrant or festering thing, though not visible to the naked eye, are perceived all the same as sweet or repulsive by one who possesses the sense of smell; and though not perceived by one who is devoid of this sense, exert all the same their good or evil influence upon him; in the same way, though the good or bad fine particles emanating from the being of a man are not perceptible to ordinary people, yet their influences are felt all the same by persons possessing higher nature. But even those persons who do not possess the capacity of feeling them are, all the same, silently influenced by them according to their respective capacities and they become good or bad accordingly.

24. The association of the good and noble souls influences for good various men, animals and plants according to their innate capacities, much in the same way, as it influences for good the residential houses of such souls and the various non-living objects kept therein. Similarly the association of evil or bad souls degenerates by its influences not only the various non-living clothes etc., but all living men, animals and plants that come under their influence.

25. To the extent one keeps himself aloof from all such men, animals, plants, houses, clothes, places, air, etc., that exercise baneful or degenerating influences on him, and seeks closer association with all such living men, animals, plants or non-living houses, clothes, places, air, etc. as exercise elevating and ennobling influences on him, to that extent he benefits himself or does good to himself.

26. Every higher force or feeling which leads a man to upward course of life, not only elevates him in his soul-life to a greater or less extent, but affects his body as well by making its cells better. Similarly, every lower desire, passion or egoistic feeling and false belief not only degenerates soul-life but prejudicially affects the physical body as well by making its particles baser.

27. All the thought and feeling waves which emanate out of man spread out to long distances in a moment through both sorts of ether, and thus the whole atmosphere is charged with various kinds of good or bad influences of different people. The people of various conditions of life attract such of them to themselves, as they have the capacity for, and absorb them according to their receptive natures. Thus knowingly or unknowingly they are moulded into good or bad natures, and feel pleasure or pain of one or other kind according to them.

28. A man living on this earth, all of a sudden and without any apparent cause, gets sad and depressed by receiving without knowledge the ethereal currents of thought or feeling of some relation of his, living at a great distance from him, or one who has departed from this earth, on account of the latter being stricken with some special sorrow, pain or misfortune. Some persons possessing an acute sense actually feel that a particular relation of theirs is in trouble. Some actually perceive such a relation in trouble by some inner sense, in, wakeful state or in sleep, and some hear with inner auditory sense the very words of their such relation.*

NOTE.—Those persons who possess this inner sense of sight or hearing to a sufficient degree can become very good mediums and thus prove helpful to others, if they so like, by arranging their interviews with such of their departed relations who are living in the next world.

29. It is the soul or life-power of man which is the architect of his own body. It lives in every organ of the body and is connected with every one of them. Thus as the soul conveys the influences of its good or bad condition to the body, so the latter in its turn also somewhat influences the soul, according to its good or evil state.

30. Various feelings of soul express themselves through face. One can by seeing the facial expression of a man find out whether he is sad or miserable, happy or unhappy, angry, vindictive, hypocrite or wicked, sincere, good, modest, etc. Nobility of a soul casts a beautiful and attractive reflection on its outer face and is felt as such by a higher soul. Wickedness of a low soul throws upon its face a bad and repulsive reflection and is felt by a higher soul to be fearful and reprehensible. To the extent that man is free from the impurities of

*The present biographer's note—This truth I had experienced in my own life. It was in the year 1905 that I was studying for Law at Bombay. One night at about 2 a.m. I got up suddenly from my sleep and felt so sad that I felt inclined to go somewhere and weep. I could not divine the cause. I could not get sleep. Early in the morning I felt that my youngest sister, who loved me too much, was lying on death bed. I dropped a letter to my elder brother in which I wrote to him that it was not fair on his part to have kept me in the dark about the serious illness of our dear sister. The day passed. I went to bed at night. But again at the same time, I got up sorrow stricken and actually wept. When the day dawned, I made up my mind to leave for home. It was then three days' journey. When I reached Hyderabad (Sindh) station, spacing I felt a sudden relief.

I reached my native place and went directly to my youngest sister's house. As soon as she saw me, she said, "So you have come after all. I have remembered you very much. There was no hope of my life. I felt deeply sorrow-stricken that I was going away without seeing you. But I am now out of danger and will soon be all right since you have come."

This is a true personal experience which happened in my own case.

Many more such instances have taken place in my own case and in the life of my wife.

evil life and gets comparatively pure in heart, to that extent the look of his face also grows better and reflects purity. And to the extent that a soul is possessed of the higher forces or loves which lead to upward path of life, to that extent the inner beauty of life casts a beautiful and attractive halo about his face. Lower life makes every *soul* ugly and repulsive and higher and noble life makes the *soul* truly beautiful and attractive.

THE FRUITS OF THE HIGHER AND THE LOWER COURSES OF LIFE.

31. According to the universal law of change just as the physical body of man harvests there and then the fruits of the violation of the laws of health in its getting diseased or sick; in the same way, the soul of man too reaps immediately the fruits of its wrong or downward courses of life by becoming diseased or sick.

32. Just as a man by taking poison inevitably suffers its harmful effects in his body, and he does not at all stand in need of any outside agency to punish him for it; in the same way, a soul does not stand in need of any outside agency to punish him for his wrong actions, because they inevitably lead him to the downward course of life. The same principle applies to the higher courses of life.

Hence the belief that a man has to stand before some so-called God, *Khuda*, *Parmatma*, *Dharm Raj*, etc., on some fixed date to receive the rewards and punishments of his acts, is absolutely fictitious and false.

33. The law relating to the punishment of crimes which the society has by degrees evolved and put into force in order to preserve external social order and peace, is altogether different from the mode of punishments based on the universal and immutable laws of Nature. While the former varies with different nations or countries, the latter is the same for all lands and nations. The former changes from time to time to suit varying conditions of the social order, while the latter is unchangeable. The former is different for different people but the latter is uniform for all humanity. While hundreds of guilty people who go off absolutely scot free under the working of the former, no man, no animal, no plant and no other object can ever or anywhere escape the operation and effects of the latter.

34. Just as a human life-force builds in the womb of its mother, a human body of the type of its parents alone and does not and cannot build the body of any animal such as elephant, horse, donkey, cat, rat, pigeon, partridge, crow, etc., or of any plant such as mango, *jaman*, mulberry, *genda*, *gulmedhi*, jessamine, radish, *dhanya* spinach, *methi*, etc., in the same way, this human life-force on the death of its physical body can build, out of the fine particles drawn from it, a body of the human type only, and cannot build the body of any animal or plant, etc., as this is against the law of Nature. Those, therefore, who believe that a man after his physical death is born again on this earth in the body

of an animal or plant, etc., cherish an impossible and totally false belief. The theory of the cycle of reincarnations or rebirths on this earth is a huge myth.

HAPPINESS *versus* GOODNESS OR EVOLUTION.

35. Happiness and evolution (or goodness) are not identical terms. Goodness always leads to happiness, while the latter not only does not in all cases lead to goodness but more often than not, produces positive evil and misery.

36. A man who is a complete lover of his own happiness alone, can never really evolve or do good to himself ; but by following the path of evolution or goodness he not only enjoys wholesome pleasures but becomes a partaker of higher forms of happiness too.

ABOUT TRUE RELIGION,

1. Every big or small organised existence belonging to the vegetable world struggles—

- (1) to continue to live, and
- (2) to resist death.

Hence it continues this struggle for existence every moment of its life. Higher up and above the vegetable world, every living being belonging to the animal and human worlds has, besides the struggle for life, developed pleasure-affording feelings, and thus every such being :—

- (1) desires to live,
- (2) desires to avoid death,
- (3) desires to be happy, and
- (4) desires to avoid misery or pain.

Every such being consequently struggles to avoid death and misery and to live and gain pleasure and even on getting pain and remaining unhappy to some extent, he tries every moment to continue his existence and avoid death.

This desire to live and to enjoy pleasure on the one hand, and to avoid death and pain on the other, is the true and fundamental natural desire of human and animal worlds.

Again, out of the desire to live and desire to enjoy pleasure, the former is present in a more powerful form than the latter. Hence barring certain abnormal conditions no man or animal ever tries to put an end to his existence. Nay, he ever and always struggles to live.

The teachings of true religion are based on the true knowledge of the immutable and universal laws about the realisation or frustration of this fundamental desire in man.

2. The existence of every man, animal or plant rests on the existence of its own inherent life-force. In other words the whole individuality of every plant, animal or man depends upon the

existence of its life-force. If under any circumstances, this life-force becomes destroyed or loses the power of sustaining its body or form, it ceases to exist as a separate organised entity and reverts into inorganic force. With the death of this life-force, the individual existence of the man, animal or plant becomes totally extinct.

Hence so long as a man does not, on the one hand, get the knowledge of true and immutable laws about his life-power (*i.e.*, about the organisation of his soul, its evolution or its preservation to the longest extent, and its dissolution or gradual decay and by and by total extinction), and does not, on the other, develop the higher consciousnesses which may save him from extinction and evolve his life, he cannot realise this true and powerful desire of continuing his existence and avoiding death.

3. *True religion is the name of all those highest psychic forces which generate and develop life-saving and life-evolving new higher consciousnesses in soul and lead to the completion of its inner organism.* To the extent that a man possesses these higher forces of *Dharma*, to that extent alone he possesses truly religious life and can be called a religious soul. Apart from these higher forces, whatever beliefs, external forms or marks, ceremonies or acts, etc., that pass under the name of religion among the people of various climes are not at all true *Dharma* or religion.

4. All thoughts and acts prompted in man by his lower desires, passions, egoistic powers, false beliefs or creeds which lead him to the downward path of life and as opposed to higher or religious powers, make his soul-life degenerated or diseased, and constitute *Adharma* or irreligion.

5. As the bodily organism of all human beings possesses various physical organs of the same kind for its due preservation and protection ; in the same way various higher soul organs which preserve and protect the soul-life are of the same kind for all human souls. In other words, there is one and the same ideal of complete higher life for all mankind.

6. As the medical science relating to human body is one and the same for all mankind, in the same way, the teachings of the science-grounded system of religion relating to the constitution of soul and its evolution and dissolution or its *Dharmic* or *Adharmic* life are one and the same for all mankind.

COMPLETE "DHARMA JIWAN" OR "SATWICK AND DEV KOSH."

7. *Those higher powers, the evolution whereof generates and develops real higher life or *Dharma Jiwan* in human soul and which

*These teachings were afterwards modified by Bhagwan Dev Atma in the third edition of the *Dev Shashtra*, Part III. Save and except Bhawan Dev Atma no human soul in the past and present has been able and no human being in the future will be able to develop complete soul-life or *Dev Kosh*. *Satwick Kosh* or altruistic forces are unfit to complete soul organism and develop *Dev Jiwan* and generate *Dev Jyoti* and *Dev Tej*.

enables it to gradually evolve various soul-organs which complete the soul-organism, are divided into two groups, one of which is called *Satwick Kosh* and the other is called *Dev Kosh*.

8. Awakening and development of the powers of *Satwick* and *Dev Koshas* lead to the awakening and development of higher thoughts and actions or higher life in soul. This in fact is called the evolution of soul. But the slavery to lower desires, passions and egoistic powers, false beliefs and superstitions awakens and develops lower life or leads to the downward course of life. This downward course or lower life of man brings about the gradual decline and decay and ultimate extinction of soul-life, besides producing various kinds of harmful sufferings and miseries. This in fact is called the dissolution of soul.

9. When a soul is born in the course of the evolutionary progress of such souls who possess altruistic powers, and becomes able to evolve in its life all those highest powers (*i.e.*, *Dev shakties*) which complete its organism; and when with such a complete organism so far as all its soul-organs are concerned, it becomes, on the one hand, free from all the downward courses of life caused by untruth and evil in relation to every part of Nature, and, on the other, evolves complete love for all the upward courses of life based on truth and goodness and thus is capable of establishing complete harmonious union with the evolutionary course of Nature, he then acquires the most worshipful *Dev Rup*, most superb of the souls possessing all kinds of altruistic powers.

Such Dev Atma being free from all kinds of bonds which produce downward courses and being connected with all the parts of Nature by upward course of life alone, is able to continue his evolutionary progress higher and higher and becomes the highest and most necessary part of the evolutionary course in Nature.

10. When a man develops in his soul, a feeling which leads him to do any kind of disinterested or unselfish good to other beings belonging to any part of Nature, he evolves a new organ which produces in him upward course of life and he begins to walk on that course to some extent. These upward-course-producing higher organs of soul are of various kinds and are all called altruistic forces.

11. In the course of manifestation and higher evolutionary change of man-world several such souls have appeared or do appear who possess the seeds of one or more altruistic powers and who have evolved or do evolve them in their hearts more or less in number or quality according to their individual circumstances. A soul is considered higher in his organism to the extent that he possesses, in a greater number or to a deeper degree, these higher or altruistic powers, and is led by them to contribute to the good of one or other part or department of Nature.

12. No soul does or can do disinterested good to any being if the altruistic force needed to prompt it for that particular sort of good is absent in it. On the contrary, if one possesses some force antagonistic

to that altruistic force, one positively does or will do undue harm in that respect in relation to some other being or existence.

NOTE.—For instance a man who possesses the altruistic feeling of mercy naturally feels a prompting or longing to actually do some merciful act in relation to some one. But a man who is possessed of the lower passion of *Hinsa* (molesting others) very naturally feels a prompting or craving to molest somebody.

13. Though a man possessed of one or more altruistic powers of soul, on being moved by them, is able to do one or other kind of good to various existences of Nature, *he cannot but go the way of untruth and wrong and do harm in several other ways* owing to his being destitute of the highest psychic forces of complete love of truth and goodness and complete repulsion for all untruth and wrong, which highest psychic forces have evolved in the Dev Atma alone. Such a man (possessing as he does only one or more altruistic forces) does not develop the capacity of complete freedom from all downward courses of life and a capacity of complete evolution of upward courses of life.

14. A soul possessed of altruistic forces develops, according to the extent of the purity of his such powers, the capacity of living a longer span of his existence—barring exceptional untoward accidents—than all those souls who are inferior to him in the ladder of evolution, and is able to live after the death of his gross body in comparatively higher regions of the next world, and to enjoy the blessings of higher life and true and higher happiness.

15. There are millions among mankind who do not possess the inner capacity for higher evolution of their soul, *i.e.*, they can never develop altruistic or higher progressive forces of life, but on the contrary possess only the capacity of going lower and lower on the path of the degenerating course of life. There are some who possess the capacity of progressing into the higher life to some extent only and not beyond that. There are again those whose number is still small who possess the capacity of making continued progress on the higher or upward course of life.

16. In the course of the manifestation and constant change of the human world, millions of souls have appeared who are so constituted that they are not only completely destitute of all altruistic forces but are incapable of evolving any such feeling. That belief of God-worshippers therefore, who allege that every human soul is born in the image of godliness or divinity and is capable of perennial progress is a huge myth.

ABOUT KNOWLEDGE.

[Possible and Impossible.]

1. A man can and does acquire *direct knowledge* concerning anything only through one or other of his senses.

2. No man can acquire direct knowledge about any subject, if the sense through which alone that knowledge can be obtained, is absent in him.

3. As the number and the depth of senses are different in different human beings, their knowledge also varies and is comparatively more or less (richer or poorer—Compiler) according to the number and the depth of their senses.

4. A man cannot acquire any knowledge whatsoever beyond the range of his senses but if he lacks them altogether, he can acquire no knowledge at all.

[*True and Untrue.*]

5. That knowledge is called self-evident, direct or true which a man acquires through one or other of his *normal* senses and which it is imperative for him to believe and which it is impossible for him to disbelieve by means of his such senses.

6. All that knowledge is called *indirect knowledge* which is not self-evident and which is not directly obtained through a requisite sense or consciousness,

7. The indirect knowledge is of three :—

(1) संस्कार मूलक—That based on superstition or tradition.

(2) विश्वास मूलक—That based on faith.

(3) अनुमान मूलक—That basen on inference.

8. The indirect knowledge of man can sometimes be true and sometimes false.

9. Any direct knowlence of man which is consistant with—

(1) साक्षात् प्रकृत बोध or the evidence of normal senses,

(2) ठीक परीक्षा or right experiment,

(3) ठीक मुक्ति वा तर्कप्रणाली or correct reasoning and logic, and

(4) प्रथम जन्म सत्य ज्ञान or already acquired true knowledge,

is called true and whatever is inconsistant with any of these four tests is untrue.

10. Man's power of imagination can be helpful in acquiring true knowledge, but true knowledge cannot always be acquired through that power alone.

11. *True knowledge is always good for man and is therefore worthy of being accepted by him.*

12. *Untrue knowledge is always harmful to man and should therefore be always abjured.*

[*Primary and Secondary.*]

13. The true knowledge relating to life-force of man or his soul is in fact the supreme knowledge and is therefore of primary importance to him; since it is through that knowledge-alone that he can protect his being from degeneration and can evolve it as far as possible according to his capacity.

14. Excepting the all-sided true knowledge regarding his own soul-life, al kinds of other knowledge is not of primary importance to man, but it is only of secondary importance to him.

15. In order to acquire all-round true knowledge about his soul, it is imperative for man to possess the knowledge of the fundamental principles of Nature, and it is consequently desirable for him to do so.

16. The propagation of the truths of all-round true knowledge of soul among all those man who may possess fit and reverential attitude of mind, is far more necessary and hence more desirable than the propagation of any or every other kind of knowledge.

[*Belief.*]

17. The mental attitude of putting trust in the words or actions of another person is termed *belief*.

18. It is both imperative and natural for every man to believe in some or other words or actions of one or other person.

19. Belief is of two kinds. (1) True and (2) False. The belief which is based upon truth, is called true belief, while the belief which is based on falsehood, is called false belief.

20. The greater the belief of one man in another, the greater would be his faith and confidence in that person's word or action.

21. *In true knowledge and not in falsehood lies man's highest and true good.* Hence it is necessary for every well-wisher of his soul to verify his beliefs or faiths by testing them on the touchstone of true knowledge and abjure at once all such beliefs or faiths which prove to be untrue or false even though millions of people may hold them to be true.

22. *In true knowledge and not in falsehood lies man's highest and true good.* Hence it is necessary for every well-wisher of his soul to stand firm in his adherence to that faith or belief which is proved true by testing it on the touchstone of true knowledge and should not in any case give it up upon the suggestion of or opposition from even lacs of people.

23. *For the attainment of true salvation and true Dharma, it is imperatively essential for every fit soul to cherish full and complete faith in the guru or preceptor who proves to be the giver of true salvation and Dharmic life to him, and who is consequently his true and greatest well-wisher and benefactor.*

24. To the extent that any man, being desirous of true salvation and Dharmic life, gives up his reliance on his own low desires, low passions, low egoistic faculties and his own judgments based upon these low forces, and endeavours gradually to strengthen his faith in his true *guru*, believing him to be true far more pure and higher in life than himself, to that extent he develops feeling of deepest reverence for him. This reverence enables him to come nearer his *guru* and establish higher union with him in order to get his higher light and power more and more.

ABOUT WORSHIP.

25. True worship consists of those exercises, which a man (desirous of getting freedom from the bondage of various groups of lower forces and of evolving higher life-producing feelings or forces of heart, and realising the Dev Atma—the manifestation of complete higher life, the true worshipful being and soul-life-evolver—to be his supreme ideal and goal of life) performs in order to—

(1) establish his heart communion with the Dev Atma and thus assimilate the rays of his unique light which removes soul-darkness ;

(2) create repulsion or hatred in himself for one or other lower or downward course of life which he may realise as hateful in that unique light ;

(3) adopt, after having seen by the help of that unique light the impurities produced in his heart by the life of lower courses, true measures of cleansing his heart of these taints by true repentance and *Parishodh*, (i.e., making amends) ;

(4) see the beauty of one or other highest psychic force of the complete ideal life of his unique *guru*, and create in his heart attraction for that ; and to steadily develop this attraction more and more ultimately to succeed in all these endeavours.

26. That course of exercises which do not enable the worshipper to get that higher light and those higher senses which are needed to show the ugliness of downward modes of life and liberate him therefrom, and to evolve higher forces of higher life in him ; or which, on the contrary, make him more and more blind, hard-hearted, sinful, impure and wicked, is termed false and harmful worship.

NOTE.—As various kinds of false gods and goddesses are found in various religious systems of the world, so false worship of various kinds is also in vogue in relation to them.

27. As long as a man does not develop in himself the necessary consciousnesses about the constitution of his soul and its evolution and dissolution, he is not able to put his true faith in the real worshipful being or to perform any real course of exercises for his true worship.

28. A man can develop in himself necessary consciousnesses about the constitution of his soul and its evolution and dissolution only through the gracious help of or association with such persons who are possessed of those consciousnesses.

[*The worshipped and the worshipper*]

29. Whenever a man does any of the acts which constitute worship, such as adoration, communion, prayer, offering, etc., in relation to any being—real or fancied—believing him to be harmful or beneficial to him, that being is termed the worshipped one or the worshipful being for him. This worshipped one is called in ordinary parlance a god or goddess and the worshipper is called his or her devotee or *bhakta* or *sewak*.

30. Among various classes of people on this earth various kinds of gods and goddesses are accepted as worshipful beings. Some of these had or have real existence while many were or are mythical.

31. The worship of real beings which was or is prevalent in this world is of the following kinds :—

(1) Worship of one's own ancestors or ancestors of others. This is called ancestor worship, *guru* worship, *avtar* worship, saint worship, hero worship, etc.

(2) Worship of some beneficial or harmful animals, such as cow, bullock, horse, serpent, etc.

(3) Worship of some trees, such as *peepal* and banyan, etc.

(4) Worship of some inanimate objects, such as sky, earth, sun, moon, fire, electricity, air, water, etc.

32. Various imaginary beings which are accepted as worshipful ones are of the following kinds :—

(1) Various supposed creators of this universe, such as *Brahm*, *Ishwara*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, *Allah*, *Khuda*, *Jehova*, God, etc.

(2) Various mythical gods and goddesses who are supposed to grant one's desires, such as *Durga*, *Saraswati*, *Kali*, *Sitla*, *Ganesh*, *Bhairon*, *Aisis*, *Kanan*, etc.

33. All the devotees, worshippers, or *bhaktas* who exist in this world are of various kinds, *viz.*—

(1) Those who worship in order to gain some worldly end, *viz.*, money, property, children, health, etc.

(2) Those who desire to attain after death some happy place of residence such as *Swargya*, *Baikunth*, *Golok*, *Shivlok*, heavens, paradise, etc.

(3) Those who desire to find out some means of subsistence.

(4) Those who desire to gain the bliss which is derived from the exercise of some altruistic feeling.

34. Any person who has—

(1) received the true light of *Satya Dev* which reveals the true philosophy of *Dharm* ;

(2) developed a yearning to gain true freedom from lower or baser life and to evolve true higher or altruistic life ;
must give up absolutely,

(1) belief in all such gods and goddesses as are purely imaginary or fictitious,

(2) all such worshipful beings who though had or have real existence but were or are absolutely destitute of the highest psychic forces which constitute the true and complete higher life.

35. It is highly necessary for any person who may possess the capacity for gaining salvation or freedom from the destructive courses of life and of evolving higher forces of higher life in himself that he

should, in order to bring about this most desirable change in his soul, unite his heart with the Dev Atma, who is the manifestation of complete highest psychic forces and who has by the evolution of these powers completed his soul-organism.

36. By uniting oneself with Dev Atma possessed of complete ideal life, a fit person can acquire that light and that power which impart right and wonderfully priceless soul-knowledge and develop higher feelings in him. This psychic light and power can produce and evolve in him necessary higher consciousnesses about destructive courses of life and thus can give him true freedom or salvation from such courses. Further more, the above light and power can produce and develop in him evolutionary forces by the creation and development of soul-life-promoting consciousnesses.

This completely organised highest soul or Dev Atma in whom all the various highest psychic forces have evolved, is the one true worshipful being for all those, who may be desirous of true freedom or salvation from destructive courses of life and true evolution of higher life. *And it is the most primary duty of every fit soul, desirous of real higher life, to truly worship only this Satya Deva or the true worshipful being.*

TRUE SALVATION AND ATTAINMENT OF TRUE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

1. So long as a man does not develop various kinds of repulsion-producing-consciousnesses in relation to all those evil or destructive courses of life which he is led to adopt in consequence of the improper prompting by any kind of his inner forces or feelings, he not only cannot get freedom or salvation from their bondage or undue influence (specially when such bondage gives him happiness), but in most cases he does not feel even the least desire to get such freedom. Nay, such a man resists even the efforts of any comparatively higher soul who may endeavour to make him free from any of his such evil courses of life and thus brings such efforts to nought. He likes to continue to indulge in his happiness-affording though destructive conduct of life.

NOTE.—What a horrible plight this is for millions of such souls and what an uphill task it is to liberate such souls from such a bondage, can best be imagined than described.

2. So long as a man does not have desire for true and correct knowledge about *Dharm Jivan* (i.e., higher life) and for evolving that higher life in himself, he does not make any attempt to undertake any religious exercise or adopt any other means to develop any higher or noble feeling which he does not possess. Nay, he feels hurt or ill at ease, at any effort which any higher soul may make for his benefit to awaken him to the necessity of performing such religious exercises. Such a soul likes to remain and does actually remain quite contented and happy in the state of his life devoid of noble feeling.

NOTE.—One can therefore imagine how most difficult and uphill task it is even to create any real desire for developing any higher feeling in such souls, even if they may possess any capacity for evolution thereof.

3. For the attainment of true salvation from lower life and evolution in higher life, it is indispensable, according to the universal law of change, for every soul—

- (1) to possess the potentiality for awakening, as far as possible, various kinds of higher consciousnesses in respect to both of them,
- (2) to get suitable environments for the evolution of such consciousnesses.

4. It is impossible for those—

- (1) who either do not possess the capacity of evolving higher consciousnesses, or
 - (2) who, in the event of their possessing such a potentiality, do not get suitable environments to evolve them ;
- to get true freedom (or *mukti*) and true higher life, (*i.e.*, *Satya Dharm Jiwan*).

5. In the course of higher evolution of the human world, Bhagwan Dev Atma—the manifestation of complete higher life or (*Purnang Dharm Avatar*)—is the only one true complete ideal of all-sided true freedom (*Sarvang Satya mokhsha*) and higher life (*Uch Jiwan*). He is the one true and complete teacher of knowledge relating to true salvation and higher life.

6. In order to awaken a desire in any person for true salvation and higher life, it is an indispensable condition that he should possess true realisation of the separate organisms of body and soul as well as about their inseparable mutual relation to each other.

7. Of all the desires that man possesses, the desire to live is naturally the mightiest one. Hence if any one were to possess true consciousness about the separate entities of his body and soul and their mutual relation to each other, he would surely develop a strong desire to get true salvation and true higher life.

8. The four kinds of powers which enable a man to adopt various means or religious exercises in order to attain true salvation and higher life are as under :—

(1) Various exercises based on contemplation or mental reflection.

NOTE.—These include reading, singing hymns, *Jap* and concentration.

(2) Various exercises based on inner longing.

NOTE.—These include all good wishes offered for oneself or others.

(3) Various exercises through word of mouth.

(4) Various exercises through actual bodily actions.

Out of these, two are inner exercises and two are outer, manifested through body.

9. Being a part of one complete Nature or Universe, it is indispensable for every person to get true salvation from all his downward or evil courses of life in relation to human, animal, vegetable and inanimate kingdoms and in order to develop higher

consciousnesses about them, every fit soul must go through all necessary (higher or religious) exercises.

10. Being a part of one complete Nature, it is indispensable for every person to adopt all those religious exercises which enable one to evolve upward-course-producing higher feelings in relation to human, animal, vegetable and inanimate kingdoms.

NOTE.—All those various religious exercises which every person has to adopt and fulfil in order to get true salvation and evolve higher life in relation to various kingdoms of the Universe (human, animal, vegetable and inanimate worlds) are called. **Yagya* or *Brat Sadhans*. The *Dev Shashtra* contains commandments relating to all these exercises and the way to fulfil them

11. The main aim and object of all religious exercises is the attainment of true salvation and higher life, hence those of them can only be called real or true which bring success in that object; that is which help man :—

(a) *To get light* with respect to his various evil courses or conducts relating to various kingdoms of Nature; and in order to get freedom from them in future as well as from their past impurities, to evolve in respect thereof

- (1) Complete consciousness or awakening ;
- (2) Complete repulsion or hatred ;
- (3) Repentance ; and
- (4) Reparation or purification.

(b) *To get light* relating to higher life-producing-consciousnesses or higher feelings and to *develop* with respect thereof :—

- (1) Complete realisation or awakening ;
- (2) Complete attraction or love ;
- (3) Higher bliss or happiness ; and
- (4) Higher energy.

12. All fictitious and false teachings which the various so-called religious denominations have imparted, in absence of true knowledge about salvation, are extremely harmful and hence worthy of being renounced. These false teachings are as under :—

VEDIC HINDU SALVATION.

[*Salvation from Tritap.*]

What is meant by *Tritap* ? It means three kinds of *Tap* or *Dukh* (i.e., pain). The early teachers of *Upanishadas* after mature deliberations came to the conclusion that man being desirous of happiness does not like pain. But he is all the same prone to three-fold miseries or pains :—

(1) *Adhyatmik*; viz., pain resulting from various diseases like fevers, etc., or from losing or not getting a thing or object deeply desired.

(2) *Adhi Bhoutik*, i.e., pains due to injuries received from any man or animal or by getting stung by any poisonous insect, etc.

These words were dropped by Bhagwan Dev Atma later on

(3) *Adhi Daivik*, i.e., pains due to heat, cold, rain, etc.

Now when any person gets this *Tattva Giyan* (i.e., philosophic knowledge) that he is not body, by feeling identified with which, he gets these pains, but that he is the soul which is quite distinct from body, and that in ignorance of that fact, he is believing himself to be the body; and being identified with it, he is feeling all the pains to which it is a prey; in proportion as he realises this fact, he would get freedom from the above three kinds of pain.

These were the teachings imparted by the writers of *Upanishadas* in the beginning. Thereafter they imparted the following teachings:—

[*Salvation from delusion or Maya.*]

This world in which a man sometimes enjoys happiness and sometimes suffers pain is in itself a big illusion.

“*Ek Mewa Dwatiyum Brahm*” is the only one true reality. He (the *Brahm*) is conscious, pure, spotless and motionless being. Human being is its image or part. Being entangled in *Maya* or delusion, he feels himself as bound up with body and suffers pains and enjoys pleasures. When this veil of ignorance is removed by the practice of *Yogya Sadhans*, he realises himself to be *Brahm* and feels that his own soul is *Brahm* according to the sayings:

or He attains to perfect felicity when he realises his self and gets freedom from *Maya*.

[*Salvation from the cycle of rebirths.*]

Human soul takes repeated births in this world in order to reap the harvest of his good or bad deeds, and reincarnates in the human, animal or plant forms. Good deeds get man a reward in the next births in the form of wealth, property, jewels, riding animals or vehicles, delicious dishes, health, beautiful damsels as wives, children, etc. Bad deeds not only deprive man of these blessings but subject him to several pains and sufferings besides condemning him to be reborn in the form of an ox, horse, ass, mosquito, snake, scorpion, mango tree, grape ivy, *datura* plant, etc. Hence it is indispensable for man to get free from the bondage of both good and bad deeds (as deeds lead to rebirths). When a man by means of *Yogya Sadhans* realises the above philosophy and gets salvation from *Maya* all his good and bad deeds vanish and the individual soul merges into *Brahm*. In such a case, he gets free from the cycle of rebirths.

This kind of salvation is known as *Moksha*, *Nishreya*, *Upvarg*, *Nirvana*, etc.

PURANIC SALVATION.

1. *By means of dip in water.*

By taking dip in the water of some particular river, lake, pond, tank, spring, staired well, etc., man not only washes clean the dirt of his body but gets pure in soul (i.e., all the impurities of his sins are washed clean). Thus he dwells after death in the regions of manifold happiness called paradise.

2. *By means of Darshan.*

A man gets freedom from the necessary consequences of his sins and the entanglements of rebirths by having the ocular sight or *Darshan* of some special idol etc., in some temple or some other specific place.

3. *By means of keeping some particular symbol.*

The above kind of salvation is attained by keeping certain symbols on one's person, *i.e.*, keeping long hair on the head, wearing some sort of nicker (*kachh*), putting on an iron ring round one's wrist keeping a sword, applying *tilak* on the forehead, rubbing ashes on the body, wearing *kanthi* or beads round the neck, branding the body with a red hot stamp, hearing some *mantra*, boring big holes through the ears, and wearing big rings in them, etc.

4. *By means of death.*

This kind of salvation is said to be obtained by dying at some special place like *Kashi*, etc.

5. *By means of uttering some word.*

The salvation from rebirths is believed to be obtained by uttering some *Mantra* or the special name of some deity.

TANTRIC SALVATION.

1. *By means of sacrifice.*

The salvation from the entanglement of rebirths is considered to be obtained by killing some specified kind of animals and offering them as sacrifices before some special god or goddess.

2. *By means of eating, drinking and adultery.*

This kind of salvation is said to be got by eating flesh and fish, drinking spirituous liquors and by sexual indulgence, etc., in certain prescribed ways. (These are called *Vammargies*).

BUDDHISTIC SALVATION.

The whole life of man is full of miseries or pains. He suffers various kinds of pains, *viz* :—

1. Pains due to birth, old age, disease, death, separation from loved persons and things, association with hated objects, unfulfilment of some cherished hope or wish.

2. All the above pains owe their origin to the clinging desire of man to live and to remain happy, in order to gratify which he has to get into the entanglements of rebirths.

3. These pains can be removed and freedom from the cycle of rebirths can be acquired.

4. There are eight means of getting freedom from pain and of attaining *Nirvana*. These are called the अष्टांग मार्ग or the eight-fold path :—

(1) Right faith, (2) Right thought, (3) Right speech, (4) Right behaviour or dealings, (5) Right means of livelihood (6) Right effort, (7) Right remembrance, (8) Right contemplation.

NOTE.—All these eight factors would at the most lead to better life and enjoyment of higher peace of mind, if the teachings given with regard to them be true and correct and if they were practically followed. But as the theory of transmigration of soul is baseless and false, so is the doctrine of salvation from the cycle of rebirths by means of above factors, fictitious. Again, even this kind of salvation is denied to women. Even males would not attain to this state if they do not abstain from married life or completely renounce their wives.

Buddhism does not teach anything relating to faith in God or any salvation being obtained through His worship or grace, etc. All such forms of faith are repudiated by Buddhism as baseless and false.

CHRISTIAN SALVATION.

Christian religion teaches that Jesus Christ was the only son or complete incarnation of the so-called God, who suffered the pains and agonies of crucifixion for the sake of saving sinners from the sufferings of the eternal hell-fire and thus invoking on his own head the inevitable harvest of pain of their sins. Those therefore who have faith in him as saviour would get a free pardon from the so-called God for all their evil deeds and thus not only get no punishment for their sins but would straight-way march on to paradise.

MUSLIM SALVATION.

God sends his prophets or messengers for the good of his people from time to time, so that according to the injunctions revealed by him they should worship Him, (*i.e.*, so-called God) and him alone and should not join other gods or goddesses with him. Prophet Mohamed was his last prophet. Those who have faith in Mohamed as their last prophet and his God as their only worshipful being, would get on the day of judgment full and free pardon for their sins and would thus reap no unpleasant result of their evil deeds. And when on being weighed in the balance if their virtues should be outweighed by the load of their sins, the prophet who would be present there for the safety of his followers, would touch the side of virtues and make it heavier by the weight of his own virtues and thereby save them not only from the just punishment of their evil deeds but would get them eternal paradise. All the rest would be hurled into a hell of flaming fire which eternally burns and they would suffer eternal pains there.

BRAHMO SALVATION.

Brahmos also, like Christians and Musalmans, believe in one God. This God would at once pardon all those sinners and mete out no punishment to them only if they believe Him to be all merciful and approach him in a penitents mood for forgiveness. This God has ordained that every sinner must repent for his sins and in a repentant mood crave mercy at His door and thus getting pardon, obey His will. According to Brahmo teachings, every person would human being inevitably, at one time or another, accept their God as

his deity and would worship Him and thereby not only get salvation from the effects of his sins but would attain eternal progress.

ARYA SAMAJ SALVATION.

According to the teachings of Pt. Dayanand, founder of the Arya Samaj, the human soul after physical death roams in the atmosphere without any body. Then God introduces this soul through some hole or through food into the form of any plant, animal or man according to his deeds. When thus introduced, the soul is reborn in a new body and enjoys pleasures or suffers pains in accordance with his past *karmas* or deeds. If he had committed the crime of theft or adultery by means of his body, he is reborn as a plant or blade of grass etc. If he had been guilty of a crime by means of speech, he is reborn as a sweeper, etc. (But it is not said what form the soul would be born into, if he committed both kinds of the above sins—*Author*.) By doing righteous deeds, he is reborn in the house of a prince or wealthy man and thus gets delicious dishes, costly apparels, attendants, riding animals or vehicles, etc. All these pleasures and pains which man thus gets on this earth are called *Samanya* (i.e., ordinary) paradise and hell respectively. So long as he does not attain salvation from these deeds, he would pass into the cycle of rebirths to enjoy paradise or suffer the penalties of hell in this manner. But when he gets salvation from all deeds, he goes into the lap of God as a formless or bodyless soul and enjoys *vishesh* (special) paradise. He then can roam about at will in all the regions of the universe (Defying all laws of gravitation—*Author*). He enjoys his stay in this special paradise for 31,104,0000,000,000 years. Thereafter he is driven out of this special paradise and is again reborn on this earth (It is not said why he is thrown into the cycle of rebirths and due to what deeds of his—*Author*). Once caught up in the entanglements of rebirths, he migrates from one body into another. The Arya Samaj holds no eternal salvation for any soul (Though the fictitious figure of years given by the Swami is tantamount almost to countless period—*Author*.)

ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH.

1. *Parlok* (next world) is the name of that finer earth of that finer solar system which under the law of gravitation, has been formed out of those finer particles which the gross solar system had been giving out of itself under the operation of the ceaseless law of change after it assumed its organised form.

2. The finer earth is divided into several higher or lower regions. These regions are termed *Lokas*. These regions are not all alike. The second is finer than the first, the third is finer than the second, the fourth is finer than the third, the fifth is finer than the fourth, the sixth is finer than the fifth, the seventh is finer than the sixth, the eighth is finer than the seventh, the ninth is finer than the eighth, the tenth is still more finer than the ninth, so on and so forth

There are about three sub-regions which are more gross than the first or the lowest region of the *Parlok*. These are called *Pradesha*. There the beings of very low nature reside.

3. If the soul of any man is able, at the time of his death, to get sufficient stock of fine particles from his own body and possesses to the required strength the constructive power for building a fine body for itself, it forms in a short while a new fine body resembling its original gross body and thus continues its existence. After building a *new subtle body of its own type and shape*, the soul goes to *Parlok* and resides in some of the higher or lower regions thereof, according to its higher or lower state. But if it is unfit to go to any region of the next world, it lives bound to this earth and resides in or around thereof. These *earth-bound* souls are called *Adham* or lowest souls and the place or colony of their residence on this earth is called *Adhamloka* or the lowest possible region.

4. A soul, which is comparatively higher in its life and character, is able, according to its powers, to form comparatively higher and finer particles in its gross body, and at the time of death, it gets for the construction of its new and fine body those higher and finer particles and thus is able to build a higher and finer body. According to the degree of its higher state, it is able to go and dwell in higher and finer regions.

5. According as a soul is lower or degenerated in its character and life, it produces more gross and lower kind of particles in its gross body and if it possesses the capacity of building a subtle body at the time of death, it builds a lower type of new body. With such a lower or less refined body, it either clings to this earth or if at all it is able to go to *Parlok*, it dwells in lower regions according to its lower state.

6. By growing higher to the extent of its capacity, a soul not only acquires the ability to live longer, but to reach higher and still higher regions of the *Parlok* and dwell there.

7. But the soul which possesses no capacity for its further evolution, begins to gradually degrade itself in any region in which it may be living and by continued degradation it totally dies either in the same region in which it is inhabiting or in some other region.

8. To the extent that any lower or degenerate soul uses any of its body organs (*viz.*, hands, feet, face, eyes, ears, sexual organs, etc.) in order to do harm to any kingdom of Nature, it loses, to that extent, the capacity of forming fine particles from that organ. Hence at the time of the death of its gross body, if that soul does not get at all the fine particles of that organ, it is not able to build that organ, and if it gets them inadequately, it builds that organ incompletely.

9. The subtle body which many souls leading sinful or degraded life, build, after the death of their gross body, is either devoid altogether of one or more bodily organs or has several incomplete or useless ones. The absence or ill-formed nature of their several

organs naturally proves a source of extreme misery to them which they suffer in addition to the pains which their sinful or degenerate life visits on their heads.

10. The earth-bound souls subsist upon the fine particles of food which emanate either from the food cooked in the houses of their own relations or of others or from the edibles sold on shops or out of the fruits of trees where they go for that object. They quench their thirst with the fine particles of water. The meat-eaters go to the slaughterhouses or the shops of the meat-sellers and assimilate the particles of blood and flesh, and besides this they kill and eat the finer bodies of such of the animals who, after their death, build a finer body but are not able to reach *Parlok* and are obliged to remain on this earth. Several times these souls kill and eat such of the little children who after death of their gross body are able to build a fine body but who are not able to protect themselves in absence of the help of their earth-bound departed relations or their protectors from the higher regions.

11. Millions of those beings of the animal kingdom upon this earth which are completely carnivorous or otherwise harmful to others, lose their existence altogether with their physical death. Leaving these, there are several animals who reach *Parlok* after physical death. Out of these departed animals, such of them as prove more serviceable and useful in various cosmic relations reach, according to the extent of their useful life, higher and still higher regions of *Parlok*. Millions of sinful and degraded human beings, including thousands of believers in one God, cannot on their death go beyond this gross earth or cannot reach beyond the first or second region of *Parlok* at the most; while cow, bullock, etc., who are useful animals, after building a finer body on their death, reach comparatively higher regions.

This same law rules the existences of the vegetable world. But the big or small trees or plants of the vegetable world do not, after their death, build their finer body near the place on which they originally stood on this earth. If they possess capacity of reaching *Parlok*, they reach there with their fine particles and taking root in that ground, build their own finer body similar to that of their previous one.

12. Subtle-bodied men, animals and plants who inhabit the various regions of *Parlok*, continue to live, in those regions, their respective daily lives in those regions very similarly as they lived on this earth with their gross bodies. The only difference there is this, that like the villages and cities of this earth, men and animals, etc., of all grades and stages of higher or lower life, do not live mixed together on the same plane but each plane or region is inhabited only by men and animals etc., of nearly the similar stage of life who are able to reach there.

13. The higher any region of *Parlok* is, the more it is suited for the residence of higher grade of men, animals, plants and trees and better is the kind of atmosphere and water, etc., there; and thus the more mutual harmony and happiness of higher kind prevail there,

i.e., their mutual relations are more and more sweet, peaceful, happy and life-promoting. As opposed to this, the lower a region is, the comparatively lower grade men, animals and plants inhabit it, hence their mutual relations are naturally comparatively less sweet, less harmonious and less felicitous. The lowest region dwellers have comparatively worse state and relations. The earth-bound souls live the most deplorable existence possible.

14. Hundreds of departed souls come and help their relations on this earth by suggestions or best wishes when they find them in difficulty or involved in some calamity. When any one of their relations is dying, these departed souls reach his death bed and not only help him in building his refined body but even take him to higher regions if he possesses fitness to go there, and there too they do one or other kind of helpful service to him.

15. So long as a soul does not possess any altruistic force by means of which he is able to do unselfish service to any department of Nature, he does not go beyond the second region of *Parlok*. Though by evolution of some of the altruistic forces, a soul develops higher and better life and acquires fitness to rise to several higher regions, yet no soul can attain to everlasting progressive evolution of higher life in him and establish complete harmony with evolutionary nature, so long as he does not possess complete or all-sided higher life.

16. Those souls also who possess no altruistic forces of heart but are dominated only by happiness-affording forces, do benefit and do progress in life to some extent, though led by feelings of gaining fame or name in this world or by the idea of reaping reward in life hereafter or by both, because *they contribute something to the service of others or work for their own intellectual progress and physical well-being*. These souls live longer and reap more innocent happiness than all those people who, unlike them, do not contribute to the betterment of others even by these means.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF MAN.

In the last chapter we published free and *not* literal translation of the philosophical and right conclusions regarding various problems connected with religion and soul arrived at by Bhagwan Dev Atma till their publication in 1909 in Vol. I of his *Autobiography*. The most glorious and yet imperious love of truth did not let Bhagwan rest content with the fields of discovery hitherto conquered and explored. He continued to capture more and more the priceless secrets from the womb of mother Nature and published them from time to time for our illumination. The first authoritative text or scripture which Bhagwan published was the *Dev Shastra*. Its first edition was placed in our hands in 1967 B. The second edition which was thoroughly revised as regards its first three parts was published in 1972 B.

In these editions of the *Dev Shastra*, Bhagwan Dev Atma devoted hundreds of pages to laying down the most valuable directions known as *adeshas* in our different relations *viz*:—(1) Parents and children, (2) Brothers and sisters, (3) Dev Samaj, (4) Wife and husband, (5) Vegetable world, (6) Master and servant, (7) *Dev Shastra* (This was subsequently substituted by the relation of one's lineage), (8) One's country, (9) Fellow-*sewaks*, (10) One's own existence, (11) Animal world, (12) Departed relatives, (13) One's race or nation, (14) Mineral world, (15) Human world, (16) Bhagwan Dev Atma.

The commandments laid down for us in all these relations are a priceless contribution to the human world. They indicate the right way not only for developing noble feelings in all these relations but to bring about highest form of harmony in them. Leaving such catastrophies over which we have no control, the most overwhelming load of human misery is the direct product of misadjusted relations due to soul-ignorance and the sway of low-loves and low-hates. Human units instead of co-operating by means of noble feelings and thus producing a music of harmonious life, have developed on account of their soul-darkness such psychic forces as lead them to rush at each other's throats. The sheep can live among themselves undisturbed but not men. The goats and cows can enjoy comparatively far greater harmony than human beings. And all this horrible misadjustment has assumed such proportions in mankind as baffle even the greatest thinkers. The soul-darkness and unbridled sway of low-loves and low-hates have made man insane. If the causes and horrible consequences of this insanity could be realised by mankind, it might at least come to the right path towards the millennium. The *Dev Shastra* has shed this light by all the commandments given in all the above relations. They may be at some time translated and published in a separate volume. Till then we have simply to give the faintest possible idea to our readers of the extent of these

commandments by the fact that in one relation only (*i.e.*, our relation to mankind) Bhagwan Dev Atma has given 72 positive commandments and 92 negative commandments.

Besides this the new problems upon which Bhagwan shed light were relating to (1) Making due and adequate amends for our transgressions, (2) True philosophy of prayer, (3) True philosophy of best wishes, and (4) *Maha Vakya*.

One full part of the *Dev Shastra* was devoted to the education and amplification of truths relating to life after death. Since some of these truths are altogether new for mankind and they are based upon facts, it will not be out of place to give a short resume of them :—

“The soul dies along with the death of its body if it possesses no capacity to build a finer body, or if it is not able to secure adequate quantity of fine cells out of the gross body or if it meets with certain accidents such as :—if it is at once burnt completely in a huge fire along with living body ; if it is buried under heavy heaps of debris of falling buildings, mud, etc., to such an extent that there is no room whatsoever left for the body even to breathe ; if it meets instantaneous death by being suddenly drowned in very deep waters or if it is at once blown to small pieces by the shells of siege guns and scattered to long distances.”

“But if none of these conditions prevail and man dies a natural death and his soul is able to build a finer body, we have to observe certain necessary conditions in order to help it to do this most valuable work successfully. These rules are as under :—(1) All the surroundings of the dying man should be neat, clean and healthy. (2) There should be sufficient passage for the fresh air to enter the place. (3) There should be no bad odour entering the place. (4) The dying man should not face any violent current of wind. (5) The dying man should be protected from rain drops falling on his body. (6) There should be no fire burnt near him. (7) There should be no crowding in the room. (8) The head of the cot of the dying man should not be close to wall. (9) His head and face should be uncovered but under extreme necessity a thin veil can be placed on it. (10) Some scent may be applied to the forehead of the dying man. (11) Nobody should stand between the head of the bed and the wall, nor anything be placed there. If anybody has to be present in the room, he should sit near the foot of the bed. (12) All noise must stop and there should be no loud talk carried on near the dying man. None should weep there. (13) The dying person should not be moved or disturbed. (14) If the feet and the hands are being drawn in with some tension, one may just pass one's hand over them softly. (15) Best wishes should be offered. (16) For full three or four hours at least the corpse should not be disturbed.

THE PRINCIPLE OF “*Hani Parishodh*.”

Another great problem of life on which Bhagwan Dev Atma shed his unique light in the *Dev Shastra*, second edition, pertained to

the doctrine of *Anuchit Hani Parishodh*. What do we mean by *Anuchit Hani*? A man is said to be guilty of *Anuchit Hani* or sin or crime, when led by his lower feelings he deprives another of his money, property, health, form, good name, happiness, felicity, life, etc. As man is ruled by his low-likes and low-hates, he cannot but inevitably commit wrong acts in relation to human, animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms. To get purified from the evil effects wrought in one's soul by such trespasses is called *Parishodh*. Now this purification is not possible unless a man awakens in himself consciousness about the ugliness of the evil act and the impurity wrought by it in his soul. This consciousness assumes four forms, *i.e.*, (1) awakening, (2) confession, (3) repulsion, (4) pain.

Now suppose, a man has cheated any one of his money. The first stage consists of awakening to the sinful nature of his act. He must see its ugliness and horror. The second stage consists of candid confession of his evil act to the person he has defrauded. The third stage consists of feeling repulsion for the evil to such an extent as to find no peace till he has disgorged the amount with interest. The last stage consists of feeling the similar pain which he has inflicted on the object of his evil act. When this is complete, he is said to have made *Anuchit Hani Parishodh*. In case the person whom one has cheated is dead, the money must be paid to his legitimate heirs. In case he cannot be traced, nor can his heirs be traced, the amount should be paid to some charitable cause.

If a man has committed an evil act in relation to animals, he must gain purification by awakening in his heart pain for that evil act. He must offer best wishes for the welfare of the animal or animals he has harmed. He must serve the species to which that victimised animal belonged. He should try to liberate other human beings from the like sins.

In several cases no money compensation can adequately make amends for the injury caused to another. A man in the pride of his official position gives barbarious corporal punishment to an innocent man which leaves in the heart of the sufferer not only a feeling of resentment and hatred but agony. In such a case one should awaken to the ugliness and horror of the act. He should then feel truly ashamed and pained. He should by word of mouth or in writing convey to the sufferer his true repentance. As far as possible he should try to remove from the heart of the sufferer the feeling of repulsion caused in his relation. This hatred should be removed if one wants full reparation. The hatred in the heart of sufferer sends vibrations which harm the soul of the offender. Hence it is of supreme importance that the offended one should be pacified and true harmony must be restored. Several times service done to the injured one brings about harmony.

All these exercises are imperative on all the people who wish good to their souls. Man is a part of the great cosmic machinery. As a part he can flourish only when he contributes to the well-being

of the whole. If instead of that he proves harmful, he must wither and die. Hence it is an imperative duty on us all to get our hearts purified from the impurities of all the evils committed by us.

THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER.

When a man is urged by a yearning of heart for something which he cannot accomplish himself but expresses it before any other person whom he believes or knows to be qualified to satisfy it, such expression of his is called prayer. As the wants or yearnings of human beings are many and various, the prayers which they offer are also many and various. They offer prayers to get rid of misery which they feel, to get satisfaction of some happiness-affording feeling, to get victory in any quarrel, to get knowledge, to accomplish any work, etc., etc.

Every human being invariably prays when he finds himself unequal to the task, he has to perform and possesses deep and sincere craving to accomplish it. But because a man prays, it does not mean that he always succeeds. Favourable conditions ought to exist before even true prayer can be successful. The conditions essential for the satisfaction of any real prayer are :--(1) the one to whom prayer is made ought to be a real being ; (2) he should be possessed of the power to grant that prayer ; (3) he should be disposed to grant it ; and (4) the expressions or vibrations of the prayer should reach him. Absence of any of these conditions must result in non-fulfilment of the prayer. Millions of people do not consider these essential conditions to be imperative. They are in the dark. Hence either they pray to beings who are mythical or their prayers do not represent their real inward yearnings or cravings. Hence their prayers are false. Millions upon millions of men offer such false prayers. If a millionaire prays to his mythical being, " Oh Lord ! give me my daily bread," is it not absurd ? He is not at all in need of daily bread.

Now the prayers for spiritual welfare should, in the first place, take the form of true yearning to get deliverance from any one of the low-loves and low-hates or evolution of one or other noble or altruistic power. If one is anxious to have a realisation of the horrors of his evil tendencies or of the enrapturing beauty of altruistic forces, he has to pray for unique soul-light. Once he gets that light and yearns to get freedom from his evil tendencies and to develop any altruistic force, he will pray for unique soul-power. This real prayer for light and power cannot come out from a person who wallows in soul-darkness and enjoys his evil life. He will fearfully resent all efforts to convey that light to him. The fountain-source of such soul-light and power is none else than Bhagwan Dev Atma.

The seeker for this unique light and unique power should concentrate his attention on the superbly unique soul of Bhagwan Dev Atma the fountain-head of such light and power, and repeatedly express his yearnings for them. When the currents of his intense

yearnings reach Bhagwan, a divine union would take place of his soul with Bhagwan. *This union would help the devotee to get the currents of unique light and power of Dev Atma.* These unique influences would work on the devotee's soul and produce corresponding change. The unique *Dev Joti* would illumine his soul. The unique *Dev Tej* would infuse new life and vigour in his soul.

Now the question arises how the currents of the thoughts and feelings of one person reach the hearts of other persons? The true reply to this query is that as the impact of wind causes waves in water which extend far and wide, as the sound vibrations in the air travel long distances and reach others, as the rays of light are conveyed by ether to millions of miles; so the *feelings that throb in the heart of any person send their currents by means of the finer ether to the heart of him with whom that sender has established his heart's union or communion.* It is according to this law that fit souls imbibe, according to the cravings of their heart, Dev Atma's unique light and power even though they may be living at a great distance from him.

THE PRINCIPLE OF "*Mangal Kamna*".

The word *Mangal Kamna* consists of two words, *Mangal* and *Kamna*. By *Mangal* we mean what is good, benevolent or virtuous. By *Kamna*, we mean wishes. So *Mangal Kamna* means wishes for one's own good or good of others. When any person feels a prompting in his heart to remove his own or any one else's pain, misery, disease or any sort of trouble or to get free from any physical or mental defect or any degrading course of life or to awaken in himself or another any higher feeling or achieve any higher object; and when moved by that prompting he is able to concentrate his mind and repeatedly wish for the said deliverance or higher evolution, as the case may be, he can be deemed to be one who is able to perform *Mangal Kamna Sadhan* for his own or any one else's good.

But if a man is utterly devoid of any feeling which may create in him any prompting for getting deliverance or higher evolution, it is impossible for him to perform the *Mangal Kamna Sadhan*. When A fails to realise the sore needs of B, C or D, when his heart does not ache for others' pains or miseries, when it ceases to throb with a desire to better other persons' condition, or when A is utterly destitute of that feeling which produces a yearning to wish well to others, he cannot at all perform an act of *Mangal Kamna*. It is possible A may make an outward expression just to please others by means of word of mouth or writing, but that would mean that A is a hypocrite. Sincere *Mangal Kamna* (offering of best wishes) not only does no harm but proves most beneficial to self and others. *Mangal Kamna* being the result of the exercise of one or other higher power of soul cannot but do good to the doer and the receiver; for, the application of a higher force must produce a good effect.

Mangal Kamna surely and silently influences the existences around and brings about changes for the better. Now question arises how far do the influences of *Mangal Kamna* reach? The waves of *Mangal Kamna* reach short and long distances.

In *Mangal Kamna* what one uses is one's own power. In prayer we beg at the door of others. In *Mangal Kamna* one helps himself and others but in prayer one begs for such help for himself or others from another.

One can offer *Mangal Kamna* for getting freedom from (1) various kinds of ills of life or maladies, (2) various kinds of miseries, (3) various forms of unnatural death, (4) premature death, (5) physical infirmity, (6) any degenerating course of life; or he can offer *Mangal Kamna* for (7) the evolution of mental powers, (8) awakening of higher feelings, (9) accomplishment of some higher object, and (10) removal of some bar in the way of any higher object.

In the same way, one can offer *Mangal Kamna* for others also in respect of all the above things. He can offer *Mangal Kamna* for the promotion of a higher institution, for the well-being of one's benefactors, dependents, animals, plants, earth, water, air, heat and other inanimate objects. He can offer *Mangal Kamna* for the good of the departed souls.

But along with the above facts we must remember that every *Mangal Kamna* does not produce equal result in all cases. Just as in the case of medicine we do not succeed in all cases, but in large majority of cases effective curatives do produce good; in the same way this force or feeling of *Mangal Kamna* produces good of different kinds in different relations to a greater or smaller extent and above all it elevates one who offers it. When a higher soul blesses another, in fact he offers *Mangal Kamna* for him.

Now the depth and intensity of *Mangal Kamna* offered for others varies according to the union of hearts. If A possesses love for B more than he does for C, his *Mangal Kamna* for B would decidedly be intenser than his *Mangal Kamna* for C. The deeper the *Mangal Kamna*, the greater would be its effect. Suppose A has harmed you and B has endeared himself to you by doing you some service, and you are anxious to offer *Mangal Kamna* for both, naturally your *kamna* would be deeper and fuller in the case of latter than in the case of the former.

One can offer *Mangal Kamna* even for one who may have injured him if his feeling to do him good is greater than his feeling of repulsion for him. According to this, one can offer *Mangal Kamna* even for his enemies.

As *Mangal Kamna* is desirable in all cases, the *Amangal Kamna* (or evil wishes) is never permissible. One can wish an end to the bad career of a bad man or wish for such conditions to accrue as might stop the course of his atrocities, it is not in any case justifiable to wish his death. The *kamna* or wish is called evil only when prompted by one's own improper gain, happiness, jealousy,

revenge, superstition, etc., one wishes evil to others. He who harbours such evil wishes does immeasurable harm to his own soul, while *Mangal Kamna* produces good in all cases.

“ *Vigyan Mulak Tatwa Shiksha.* ”

It was in the year 1912 that Bhagwan Dev Atma published a booklet of 122 pages called *Vigyan Mulak Tatwa Shiksha*. How it was appreciated by the Dev Samaj public is apparent from its review which was published in the *Science-Grounded Religion* for October, 1912, which we bodily quote here :—

“ A UNIQUE BOOK.”

Vigyan Mulak Tatwa Shiksha is a recent publication of Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan in which he has clearly explained his true, unique and most valuable teachings regarding (1) Universe, (2) Man, (3) Knowledge and faith, (4) Love. The study of this book presents quite a new, true and highest object of life to an unbiased and right-minded man. It gives a very lucid and eloquent description of the valuable truths discovered by Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan about these very important subjects as compared with the highest thoughts to which human mind in this age has given expression in this connection. It shows how these truths strike at the root of each and every false belief of the fiction-grounded religions and expose their falsehoods. It shows how the beliefs of “ one without a second *Brahma* ” or of creator or maker of this universe or materialism or idealism are totally false ; how the immutable law of change is producing two opposite conditions of things under favourable or unfavourable environment ; how the various prevalent beliefs about man’s soul are false and what are the true knowledge and teachings about it in their stead ; and how and to what extent are its protection from dissolution and its evolution possible ; what is the foundation of true faith and what is its glory ; what is the nature of love which is so much talked of in this world ; how many kinds of love there are and what fruits they are producing in the life of man ; which kind of and whose love saves the soul and by what means is it distinguished from other loves, etc.

The above book was a precursor of the second edition of the *Dev Shastra* which was issued in 1915 as mentioned in the last chapter. This book is now out of print.

We have up to now dealt with only such truths and such philosophic conclusions as Bhagwan Dev Atma published for the greatest good of mankind up to the year 1915. Thereafter, the Dev Samaj literature was substantially enriched by several other publications from the pen of Bhagwan Dev Atma. However it was in the year 1921 that a special book of 171 packed pages in Hindi was added to our literature which contained four great principles relating to the soul of man.* As truths taught therein are of supreme importance to every man and as they manifest a great advance in the philosophical

The free English rendering of that publication has been published in *Science Grounded Religion*.

outlook, we give here only a list of contents thereof with the sole object of making our short biography of Bhagwan's life and teachings as historically accurate as we can and to interest our readers in studying the same in the original :—

1. *Introduction*.—Gives in brief a conception of Nature and the immutable laws working in it, upon which alone the knowledge of true *Dharma* must have its basis.

2. *First Chapter*.—In the entire being of man consisting of an organised body and an organised life-power or soul, it is the latter which is the more essential and fundamental part of man's existence than the former.

3. *Second Chapter*.—Deals with the indissoluble connection of man's soul with its organised living body ; various spheres of finer earth where man's soul resides with its subtle body after the death of its gross body here ; the different stages or states of the subtle-bodied souls which are a continuation of their condition of life on this earth ; the form and nature of the subtle-bodied soul, etc.

4. *Third Chapter*.—Deals with the degenerating and destructive courses of man's life and their real causes—the low-loves and low-hates. Falsehood and its practice—in which are detailed at least the twenty kinds of falsehoods which are rampant in this world, *i.e.*, falsehoods, resorted to :—(1) For the sake of monetary gains (2) For the sake of hiding a wrong, (3) For satisfying jealousy and vindictiveness. (4) In making false promises or pledges. (5) In giving false fears and false temptations to others. (6) For the sake of defending one's false beliefs or superstitions. (7) In giving false evidence to satisfy any low-love or low-hate. (8) In cutting false jokes or assuming false guises. (9) In improperly defending one's own self or any one's relations. (10) Due to one's anxiety to explain away one's failure in duty or right promise. (11) Out of one's undue regard for another. (12) For flattery of others. (13) For displaying false humility before others. (14) In telling false news to another. (15) In order to form a combination or society or for its promotion. (16) For propagation of false miracles in order to establish false glory. (17) In distorting or misinterpreting the meanings of some text or writing. (18) In describing some book as a revealed one. (19) In falsely declaring persons of another caste, creed, society, community or nation, etc., as low or degraded. (20) In falsely believing as one's own possession all that belongs to Nature.

Consciousness and unconsciousness about soul life and symptoms thereof. The most horrible results of soul-degradation, *i.e.*, (1) Intemperance of various kinds leading to bodily diseases, mental tortures and losses of money and premature or unnatural death. (2) Slavery of various kinds, leading to different sorts of undesirable sufferings and pains and other harmful consequences. (3) Perversion of inner vision or mind and its most harmful and disastrous consequences. (4) Gradual loss of various soul-powers and ultimately of body-constructing power and consequent total extinction.

5. *Fourth Chapter* deals with, the way of getting real freedom or true salvation from the degenerating tendencies and slavery to low-loves and low-hates of soul ; and various kinds of false teachings of different religious creeds about the imaginary salvation of soul. It also deals with the true evolution of soul, its foremost necessity and the true way for its attainment.

This book in fact was a precursor of the third edition of the *Dev Shastra* Part III of which we are giving a very short resume in the next chapter.

VI

LATEST TEACHINGS ABOUT MAN AND HIS SOUL.

As was essential Bhagwan's unique soul, being possessed of his ever growing unique psychic light, continued to see and realise new truths as he went deeper and deeper into the problems of soul-life. In the last chapter, we have made a very brief mention of some of the publications which he wrote from time to time in the long period of about eighteen years after publishing his philosophical conclusions about the one, true science-grounded religion at the end of Vol. I of his *Autobiography*. Now in order to give our readers some idea of the latest teachings of Bhagwan Dev Atma, at least about man and his soul, propounded by him in the last monumental work of his life—the third part of the *Dev Shashtra* (third edition) which he completed only a few months before his departure from this earth—we give here a very brief summary thereof :—

MOST DEPLORABLE UNCONSCIOUSNESS OF MAN ABOUT HIS SOUL.

It is true that, in the course of evolution, several such remarkable soul forces have appeared in the soul of man as are practically absent in the animal world. It is by means of these special powers which he had had favourable conditions to grow and develop in the past thousands of years, that he has been able to perceive and get knowledge of those truths and principles relating to various objects and departments of Nature which are utterly a sealed book to the entire animal world. In absence of such special powers, it neither was, nor is, possible for the entire animal world to perceive these truths and thereby grow conscious of them.

But it is extremely deplorable that millions among men are *void even of a desire* to get knowledge of those most precious and necessary truths or principles which relate to their very existence. Their desire to get knowledge relating to their being is infinitesimally small in comparison to their desire to get knowledge of the external world.

It is but a truism that the one knowledge which is most essential for man and which he should acquire in preference to every other knowledge, is the knowledge of his own being. In the entire being of man, soul is the most essential part. Hence there is still greater need for man to acquire, above all kinds of knowledge, true knowledge about his soul.

But how deplorable it is that, millions of human beings inhabiting this earth, betray such a very primitive and low stage of psychic growth, that they manifest not the least desire to get the knowledge of those nature-based *truths which relate even to the organism of their body*, its diseases, the general causes of these



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA
At the age of about 78 years.

diseases, their evil effects, etc., and the laws of building and growing the beauty of their body and physical strength. Because of this ignorance and slavery to the various low-loves, they do not enjoy those blessings of sound health and robust constitution which even many of the animals enjoy on account of their living in natural conditions.

Again millions upon millions of human beings are so absolutely engrossed in the gratification of those various low-loves which afford happiness to their body and ego, and they are so completely taken up by thoughts and deeds pertaining to them, that in their present state of unconsciousness they are disabled from paying any thought to their soul. Thus they are and continue to remain completely unconscious, insensible and ignorant of their soul.

Those people again who, in the name of religion, entertain one or other belief regarding soul, and perform one or other so-called religious exercise, and teach and preach their doctrines, are in the same boat with others. Their fundamental doctrines are opposed to the truths and facts of Nature. Hence they grope in utter darkness about the nature of soul and the laws of its growth or decay or evolution and dissolution. Thus all over the world there prevails utter unconsciousness, insensibility, ignorance and blindness about soul.

What is meant by utter unconsciousness of soul? A man is said to be unconscious about his soul or self-knowledge when in the first place, he *possesses no desire* at all for getting true knowledge of his soul, and in the second place, he is *utterly ignorant of his incapacity to perceive truths* relating to his soul-organism, its diseases, its decay, its death, its evolution, etc. Such incapacity is due to the soul-darkness created by his happiness-affording various low-loves. To be void of these and similar senses or consciousnesses means soul unconsciousness.

LOVE OF LOW HAPPINESS THE MAIN CAUSE OF MAN'S SOUL BLINDNESS.

The main or the most fundamental cause of the soul-unconsciousness or blindness that is found in man is his (vivid) consciousness of the various forms and kinds of low happiness and (also) his love for them. This love of low happiness is most harmful to his being. *It is inevitable for a lover of low happiness to desert on many an occasion the cause of goodness*, to grow hostile to goodness and even to smother it or crush it, and even espouse evil or anything antagonistic to goodness. It is also inevitable for a lover of low happiness not only to harm his soul-life but even his physical existence. Low-loves of tasteful things, sexual passions, intoxicants, bodily comforts, idleness, etc., lead man to transgress the laws of health, sink into intemperance and produce thereby those physical maladies and that loss of bodily strength and vitality which evils we rarely find among animal world.

Even a lover of low happiness possesses a dominant desire to live and not to die, and he is naturally anxious therefore to prolong his existence. But it is deplorable that warped by low-love of pleasure, he feels not the least pain at his utter blindness with respect even to the laws which promote life and the laws which bring about death, not only of his soul, but even of his body. It is often witnessed that a man enslaved to a low-love of pleasure continues its gratification even in the face of fact that such a gratification is harming his body, vitiating his vitality and even menacing his physical life itself. How very extremely deplorable is this state of man and how more pitiable it is than the state of an animal!!

THE URGENT NEED OF DEV ATMA TO REMOVE THIS CONDITION
AND TO EVOLVE HIGHER LIFE IN FIT SOULS.

Low-love of happiness, of whatever kind or nature it may be, inevitably leads those, who are slaves to it, to tread the path of falsehoods, evils, sins, crimes, etc., and to become lovers of falsehood and wrong. This is the reason why we do not witness that reign of untruth and wrong in the animal world which we find so terribly rampant in the human world. This love of falsehood and wrong degenerates man and deteriorates the organism of his soul-life much in the same way, as life of intemperance and over-indulgence deteriorates human bodily organism. One of the most dangerous results of soul-degeneration is that it produces perversion of mind or soul-vision. Such perverted soul views as beautiful, fascinating and profitable all that affords him happiness, even though it may materially harm him and others. He clings to it though it may breed positive evil. He views to be evil and harmful all that gives him pain even though that (pain-giving action or object) may be positively beneficial to his existence and conducive to the good of others. In this perverted state, it is impossible for this lover of low happiness to eschew the wrong path and tread the path of goodness and love it. He begins in course of time to hate goodness.

For millions of years mankind has lived in this state. To bring about a transformation in it, what was most urgently needed, was the manifestation of the Dev Atma.

The Dev Atma in his unique light has discovered those fundamental and most precious truths about (1) the nature of soul-life of man, (2) the relation of his soul with his body, (3) the organism of his soul, (4) the various kinds of happiness-affording loves in its soul-organism, (5) the various kinds of repulsions, falsehoods, sins, evils, crimes, etc., which are directly due to low-loves for happiness, (6) the most deplorable soul degeneration of man due to these, (7) the true salvation from that degenerated state, and (8) the necessity and means of evolution of life-promoting higher forces in his soul. These truths were not discovered by any one before the advent of Dev Atma. They are embodied in *Dev Shastra*.

THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN BODY AND SOUL,

The entire being of man consists of his bodily-organism and soul-organism of which the latter is the more essential one. Man has appeared in the course of evolution from one of the branches of the Mammalian group of animals. But though evolved from animals, he is possessed of those distinguishing intellectual powers or forces which in their progressive form are totally absent in the entire animal world. Because of these powers, he clearly stands demarcated from his parent stock.

The body and soul of the human child is the product of its parents. When the union of parents leads, according to the law of Nature, to the natural attraction and coalescence of the two cells, sperm of the father and ovum of the mother, a new active cell is formed. This new cell possesses both a living material vehicle and a life-power. This life-power builds the bodily-organism for itself by assimilating food from mother's blood. This tiny body-forming life-power is the tiny soul which grows with the body. When the completely formed body is delivered by mother in the fullness of time, the human child enters the new world in which it begins to breath by means of its lungs and its further development continues by means of its various preliminary consciousnesses or instincts such as:—(1) instinct of hunger, (2) instinct of thirst, 3) instinct of passing urine, (4) and instinct of passing stools, (5) instinct of sleep, (6) instinct of quietness or rest, (7) instinct of pain, (8) instinct of pleasure or comfort. The motive forces that rule man from his childhood even as regards his physical life are of acquiring pleasure and avoiding pain. He feels hunger and eats without knowing what kind of food his body really needs. He feels thirsty and drinks without the least care whether the water that he drinks is really pure and should be drunk at that time or not. His palate relishes delicious things and he takes them and grows fond of them even though they may harm him. Bodily rest gives him comfort; hence he develops idleness or at least hates effort. By and by he feels the gratification of sex organs to be pleasant and rushes madly to snatch as much joy as possible, though the results are disastrous to his own being as well as to others. He avoids pain. Hence when he gets diseases which give him pain, he naturally struggles to cure himself of them. But he seldom tries to cure such of his diseases that are not painful. *The love of pleasure is a blind force. It leads him towards darkness, and he avoids light.* This blind hunt after extorting as much gratification of his various pleasure affording lower forces which he thus develops, has made man's being the breeding ground even of those physical maladies even the trace of which we do not find at all in the animal world. Again, the animals do not waste their body in the way as man does, because animals have not developed that insane love for low happiness which man has. Led by their instincts animals fulfil the laws of physical health better than man and hence they better ealth.

SOUL THE BUILDER NOT THE PRODUCT OF HUMAN BODY.

The theists do not believe that soul builds the body. The materialists do not believe even in the existence of soul. They consider that what the world believes to be soul is a mere manifestation of body or a mere aspect of it. The theists believe that God does the work of creating soul. Bhagwan Dev Atma teaches that all bodies of vegetable and animal existences and human beings are built by their respective constructive life forces. If an expectant mother has abortion prior to the sixth month of her conception, the human child is there but with its incomplete body. Its life-force which was building the body out of mother's blood is deprived of the wherewithals to build it further and its work stops. If it is not the life-force that builds the body, let the incomplete body be, in that case, completed by any God, *Allah*, *Parmatma* or any body else. Do we not see that if a man puts few grains of wheat in boiling water, the life-power in them dies? They look grains all the same. But it is impossible for them to grow green blades even if they be planted in a fertile soil and given all possible conditions of growth, *viz.*, water, sunshine, etc. They will never give us wheat plants. This is because it is the life-force that builds body out of the grain and that when it is destroyed, the only operative cause disappears and hence the effect—work of building—stops. The God of theists is believed to be omnipresent and omniscient. He should therefore be present in the seed and in the land. Let him, if he is a real being and all-powerful, build the plant out of the boiled grains which have lost their life-power. But God is a myth; a myth can achieve nothing. Nay, even real man would fail to grow anything out of these boiled grains because the life-power which is the real builder is absent in them.

Again look at the animal world. People boil the eggs of a hen for the purpose of eating. Let them keep a boiled egg under the fostering wings of mother hen. No amount of fostering would hatch the young one out of it. This is because the life-power there is dead. When the life-power of the egg is dead, no God or goddess, no prophet or messenger, no *Rishi* or *Muni*, no peasant or prince and no other power of any description would be able to hatch out of the stuff present in the boiled egg a young one. This is the immutable law of Nature.

Again the materialists say that soul is nothing but a manifestation of the body. This also is absurd, for when soul alone is the builder of the body itself, how can it be its manifestation?

Though the various types of life-powers differ, yet they all possess the following fundamental characteristics :—

- (1) The capacity of constructing a living body.
- (2) The power of nourishing the bodies which they build.
- (3) The capacity of keeping alive their living bodies for longer or shorter period.

(4) The power of procreating other similar beings under suitable conditions.

All these fundamental characteristics are found ordinarily in plant, animal and human existences.

SOME ERRONEOUS VIEWS ABOUT SOUL.

There are several erroneous views rampant in the world about soul which being opposed to the immutable laws of Nature are not only false but are harmful too. Some of them are as under :—

(1) A view prevails that soul is unborn and self-existent. This is a false view, for soul like body, is, as has been shown above, a product of the union of parents' cells. Hence it owes its origin and birth to parents and has therefore a beginning. It is the product of conditions which operated then. It can also live only under certain conditions in Nature and not otherwise. It is not therefore self-sufficient or self-existing and eternal.

(2) A view prevails that soul is not contaminated by evil thoughts and acts. A man may harbour evil thoughts and may be guilty of atrocious deeds, but his soul is unaffected and unchanged. *This view is false* and is contradicted by the irrefutable facts. The soul of man is an organised entity having several powers. It is his feelings which move him to thoughts and acts. The throb or urge of a feeling changes it as well as its body. If man's thoughts and deeds to which he is led by his feelings are vicious and degenerating, his soul gets vicious and degenerated. If his thoughts and deeds prompted by his higher feelings, are noble and uplifting, they bring about better change in his soul. It is therefore a sheer self deception or an utter delusion to believe that the soul is unaffected or unchanged by lower or higher courses of conduct as due to soul-forces.

(3) Another view prevails that soul never dies or that it is immortal.

This too is contradicted by facts and laws of Nature. *No life-power in plants, animals or human beings is such that it can never die whatever be the conditions.* As these life-powers are the product of Nature's constructive conditions, they also die under Nature's destructive conditions. By going the way of its degenerating courses the soul or life-power of a man suffers also in its vitality or constructive power. If its degenerating course of life continues unchecked, its vitality or constructive power gets vitiated to such an extent that it loses even the capacity of building a subtle body ; and hence, with the death of its gross body, it also dies, for soul cannot live without a living body.

(4) The Vedantists believe that all the individual souls have no separate and individual existence but that there is only one existence called *Brahm* who permeates in them or is the only reality, while individual souls are mere appearances.

This view too is contradicted by stern facts. As bodies of all the men differ from one another in some aspects or ways—and this is why we are able to distinguish them—in the same way, souls of all human beings differ from one another in some way and are distinguishable owing to their respective traits of character. It is these distinguishing traits which give every soul a definite existence. Again, when a man develops his self-consciousness, he feels his self as quite distinct from others. A boy A in school knows that his own self is different from his school-fellow B. When the teacher asks B to recite a lesson and he instructs B, the boy A feels that the teacher is asking and instructing B and not him. When a shopkeeper sells something to a customer, he feels that he and the customer, are two separate entities. When a complainant files a criminal case against anybody for theft, bribery, looting, etc., he knows that he and the accused are two different entities. Thus there is definite difference existing among souls due to their thoughts, beliefs, actions, etc., and neither are they all one, nor are they parts of the one so-called *Brahm*.

This belief is not only false but is most harmful. If a man were to cherish this belief that *Brahm* alone exists and all the countless existences in human, animal and plant worlds do not at all exist and that they appear as existing owing to ignorance, delusion or *maya*, he can very reasonably cherish another false belief that he can do no wrong to others as they do not exist, and hence he can never degenerate by even most infamous deeds. He can believe that all his evil thoughts and vicious deeds done in relation to others are fancies, as neither he exists nor any other being exists save and except one *Brahm* and those, therefore, in whose relation evil thoughts and deeds are done cannot and do not in fact exist. Moreover when he himself is a *Brahm*, he can never be contaminated, being inherently incorruptible. It would not be surprising if such a man, inoculated with the serum of such absurd beliefs, gives free vent, wherever possible, to the gratification of his powerful evil feelings or low-loves and degrades himself and others and produces sin and misery all round.

(5) Some theists believe that by means of *yoga* practices man develops an extraordinary power which enables his soul to leave his body here, and in that bodiless state to fly like birds and roam at leisure in various regions, and after he has done his travels, to safely return to his body, and begin his round of duties here.

This is an erroneous view. *The holders of this view lose sight of two great truths, firstly, that when a soul leaves the body altogether, the body immediately dies.* When the body thus dies, it is impossible to resuscitate it by any means and under any conditions. The body dies altogether. Secondly, *that soul of man can never live without a living body—be it gross or fine. It can never function without a living body.* It cannot see, hear, speak, understand or do anything without body. It cannot think or feel without body. Hence *immaterial soul or soul without body can never exist.*

(6) It is also an error to believe that any person by the practice of *yoga* or by any gift of occult power by some person, can get the ability of changing himself into a goat or sheep, cow or bullock, horse or camel, elephant or bear, wolf or lion or dog, crow or pigeon, serpent or scorpion, etc. This is opposed to the law of Nature. Similarly all such stories of miracles which are prevalent as having been performed by the so-called God's so-called only Son, Prophet or Messenger or any *Rishi*, *Muni*, *Sidh Purush*, etc., etc., being against the laws of Nature, are totally false.

THE ORGANISED EXISTENCE OF SOUL.

As the body of man is an organised existence consisting of various limbs and organs, in the same way, soul also is an organised existence consisting of various powers as its organs. The complete organism of the body of man has developed after millions of years of evolution as operating in the animal world. Besides the complete body that man possesses, he is endowed with mental and heart forces which too have progressed. But though the body of man organically became complete, his soul remained incomplete in its organism. We call soul incomplete because in the first place it is *devoid of that light* which might show him in its true form, the hideousness of those lower courses of life which he pursues in his hunt for his lower happiness, and *that higher repulsion and pain* for those courses which might liberate him from them; and in the second place, he is devoid of the higher life-promoting feelings or consciousnesses which may evolve his soul-life. Millions among human beings have reached, by continuous pursuit of downward courses of life due to various low-loves for happiness, to such a state of degeneration that they have lost the very capacity for evolving higher constructive forces of soul. *Their souls are incapable of any change for the better.* But there are some among mankind who have not reached that hopeless stage and they can to a certain extent develop higher forces which may free them from evil courses and evolve higher life in them.

The incomplete organism of soul which mankind as a rule possesses, comprised of the following powers :—

(1) Body-building, body-sustaining, body-controlling, and body-repairing, four kinds of powers.

(2) Knowledge-imparting mental powers of various kinds.

(3) Happiness and misery sensing or realising various kinds of consciousnesses.

(4) Various kinds of loves for happiness and repulsions or hates for pain or misery, both lower and higher.

KNOWLEDGE-IMPARTING INTELLECTUAL POWERS.

By knowledge is meant the direct consciousness or realisation of the outer form of any existence in Nature or of any of its inner qualities, and objective form of any phenomenon in Nature or its true cause or of any law of Nature working behind Natural

Phenomena. All those powers of man which enable him to get knowledge in any line are called mental or intellectual powers. These can be classified into four groups.

The first group consists of the following mental powers :—

- (1) *Sense of sight*, giving knowledge of various forms.
- (2) *Sense of hearing*, giving knowledge of various sounds.
- (3) *Sense of taste*, giving knowledge of different tastes.
- (4) *Sense of smell*, giving knowledge of different odours.
- (5) *Sense of touch*, giving knowledge of various temperatures.
- (6) *Sense of touch*, giving knowledge of different weights.
- (7) *Sense of touch*, giving knowledge of hardness and softness of things.
- (8) *Sense of touch*, giving knowledge of roughness and smoothness of objects.

The second group of these intellectual powers consists of :—

- (1) Consciousness of "I."
- (2) Consciousness of "my" or "mine."
- (3) Consciousness of "others."
- (4) Consciousness of "his" and "yours."

For some time after the child is born it possesses no consciousness of "I." It feels hunger and eats. It feels thirst and drinks. It sleeps. It cries when uncomfortable. But in all these activities conception of "I" is utterly absent in it.

But time comes, when, with the growth of his body and soul, he develops the consciousness of "I" and "mine." He knows his mother as *his* mother. He knows his toys as *his* own toys. He begins to say, "*I* feel hungry," "*I* feel thirsty," "*I* am feeling sleepy," etc.

However for a long time he does not develop the consciousness of responsibility for his actions and whether any action done by him is harmful or otherwise to himself or to others and that he does not feel responsible for it. This is why he is not at all triable in any court till a certain period of his life for any wrong act he does.

This consciousness of "I" develops in him the consciousness of other beings, that is they and he are not one but quite separate existences.

The third group of intellectual powers consists of the powers of :—

- (1) Apprehension.
- (2) Memory.
- (3) Imitation.
- (4) Imagination.
- (5) Inquisitiveness.
- (6) Thinking.

(7) Reasoning.

(8) Concentration.

It is these eight powers which man has received in his evolution in their progressive form and it is they which have enabled him not only to control and use elements and other natural objects and forces but to control the entire animal world too.

The fourth group of mental powers which man possesses consists of :—

1. In relation to forms—

- (a) Consciousness of straightness or otherwise of any edge, length or breadth, etc.
- (b) Consciousness of bigness, smallness or equality.
- (c) Consciousness of circular or globular shapes.
- (d) Consciousness of angles formed by two lines.
- (e) Consciousness of triangular, rectangular, heptagonal, hexagonal, octagonal, etc., shapes.
- (f) Consciousness of two or more lines being parallel.
- (g) Consciousness of evenness of surfaces.
- (h) Consciousness of various kinds of arched forms.

2. Other consciousnesses regarding form, *viz* :—

- (a) Ordinary consciousness of beautifulness and ugliness of any form.
- (b) Consciousness of proportion or disproportion, orderliness or disorderliness of various parts or organs of a body.
- (c) Consciousness of cleanliness and dirtiness of any form.
- (d) Consciousness of brilliance or otherwise of any form.

3. Consciousness of harmony or rhythm in the waves of sounds.

4. Consciousness of enumeration, extent, finiteness, infiniteness, limitedness, unlimitedness and of time, etc.

5. Consciousness of the ethereal, gaseous, liquid and solid states of material objects.

6. Consciousness of differentiation of material objects from each other.

7. Consciousness of the motion and power of inanimate forces, their change from one form to another and of the various kinds of changes they produce in material objects and the consciousness of the laws relating to the changes occurring in matter and force.

8. Consciousness of the mutual difference of various kinds of life-powers ; the consciousness of the organism of living bodies, their health, diseases and death, and of their physical development and degeneration, etc.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF HAPPINESS AND PAIN, THE ROOT CAUSE OF MAN'S THOUGHTS AND DEEDS.

Man has received from his animal ancestors various consciousnesses of pleasure and pain. In the course of his own evolution, he has, besides developing those consciousnesses, evolved many altogether new ones. He has evolved sense of cleanliness, sense of beauty, sense of order in things, sense of rhythm and harmony in sound waves enabling him to sing various tunes in music, sense of poetry and style, etc. Besides these some of the human beings have developed sense of feeling pain at another's physical pain or disease, another's want, another's mental agonies and thus growing sympathy, charity or fellow-feeling, etc., etc. These people feel pleasure in doing serviceable acts in relation to others even though in the performance of those acts they are called upon to make sacrifices of their own money, time or energy.

These various consciousnesses of pleasure and pain which man has inherited or evolved do not remain mere feelings but gradually develop into very strong attractions or loves for whatever is pleasure-affording, and very strong repulsions or hates for whatever is pain-giving to him. In their highly developed form, these various loves for pleasure and hates for pain or misery become the ruling springs of the thoughts and actions of men. *In fact all thoughts and deeds of man are due to his such pleasure or pain affording senses or developed loves or hates for them.* Man likes to do all such acts in relation to his own self or others which afford him pleasure or at least give him no pain, but he eschews all acts as are calculated to give him pain, irrespective of the consideration whether such acts are good or bad, beneficial or harmful, virtuous or wicked. *Again, he avoids thinking of truth, speaking truth, accepting truth and siding with truth if it gives him no pleasure or on the contrary brings him trouble. He also avoids doing any good to others, or making any sacrifice of wealth, property, bodily comfort, etc., for the other's welfare if all that affords him no joy or on the contrary brings any discomfort, pain or trouble to him. Thus it becomes impossible for him to stand by truth and goodness when they give him no pleasure or cause him pain.* On the contrary he sides with untruth and evil when they yield him pleasure. Gradually he begins to love what is false or untrue and what is evil or antagonistic to goodness.

This love for pleasure and hatred for pain leads a man sometimes to do good also. A man who is otherwise a drunkard, a libertine, a bribes-taker, a cheat, a dishonest man, a hypocrite, does on occasions contribute money, etc., for the good of others led by the feeling of mercy or love for the fame and name, or superstitious belief of going to heaven by pleasing some deity by such charity or even led by strong attachment for somebody. Men otherwise avowedly wicked have built institutions to have a good name. Led by mercy some have opened hospitals. The most worldly-minded and known dishonest men have built wells, *dharmshalas*, schools, orphanages, etc., out of the superstitious belief that their

deity would get pleased and in exchange award them some great happiness after death, etc. But all this is done by him through love of pleasure and hatred for pain.

This masterful love of pleasure leads man even to pass through pain and sufferings in order to gratify it. Man otherwise hates pain. But when any love for pleasure is very strong in him, it cannot bear obstruction from any other less powerful feeling, and hence during clash of forces the stronger subdues the weaker forces. Thus urged by a powerful love for pleasure he knowingly resorts to such acts as not only degenerate his soul but cost him even physical health or life itself. *The slavery to pleasures consequently brings about both bodily and spiritual harm to man.*

Love of pleasure is not always low. Sometimes, though it is rare, man feels pleasure in some act of service of others. As men led by love for gambling and drinking squander away all their property in such acts, in the same way, persons led by mercy sacrifice their energies and money for the removal of physical pain of others. Some establish asylums. Some found hospitals. Some open schools and colleges. Some contribute vast funds for the propagation of their cherished beliefs. But though this love for higher pleasure enables them to do good and charitable acts, it cannot liberate them from the slavery of various low-loves for pleasure that they possess. Hence such people take flesh, use intoxicants, follow evil social customs, traffic in falsehood in defence of their creeds, indulge in intemperance of various kinds and commit various acts of injustice and wrong, while all of them grope in utter and absolute darkness about the nature and organism of their soul, its degeneration, its salvation from degeneration, its higher evolution, etc., etc. Nay, it is inevitable for a man led by love of pleasure, and hatred for pain to act against truth and goodness and embrace untruth and evil.

Man can therefore be rightly defined as a being who loves pleasure and hates pain and led by both, loves untruth and evil in his cosmic relations.

This also establishes the truth that sins and crimes which man so frequently and readily commits are due to the fact that such acts gratify one or other love of pleasure in him and they cause no pain to him. In the same way, man avoids truth, eschews good, turns his back on good society, grows indifferent to higher literature, because they do not satisfy any love of pleasure in him. All the relations that man establishes are based on these various loves for pleasure and hatred for pain. *If a man ceases to get pleasure from any relation, he cuts himself off from it without regard to the justice or injustice of his step.*

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HUMAN SOUL AND DEV ATMA.

There are any amount of the so-called religious beliefs and creeds prevalent in the world. All of them without an exception

have placed before mankind one or other form of happiness as the supreme ideal of man's life. The salvation means, with them, the deliverance from pain. This is because low-love of happiness is the ruling or basic motive of man's life. It is this low-love of happiness and low-hatred for pain in man which has led in fact to the creation of various religious beliefs and creeds, various gods and goddesses, various forms of prayers and worships, *Yagyas*, *Homs*, sacrifices of animals, etc., renunciations, fasts, baths, pilgrimages, keeping various kinds of outward symbols, etc., etc. All of these practices being not in conformity with the true and higher laws of Nature are all fiction-grounded and false.

Therefore the manifestation of Bhagwan Dev Atma in the course of evolutionary process working in Nature, as the complete lover of truth and goodness and possessor of complete consciousnesses thereof is intended not only to save fit-souls from all these mythical religious beliefs and practices and all kinds of evil thoughts and deeds, but to impart to them the unique light of Nature-based science of religion and to evolve in them life-promoting higher senses or consciousnesses and thus bless the world with all-sided goodness and truth.

This unique manifestation of Dev Atma possesses fundamental marks of distinction from all human souls which are as follows :—

1. Born with the unique hereditary germs of the unique forces of the love of truth and goodness, Bhagwan Dev Atma evolved these unique and complete forces by means of all necessary surrenders, sacrifices and getting favourable cosmic conditions and generated as a consequence thereof that unique ideal life which has made him a Dev Atma. *These unique divine forces of complete love for truth and goodness have been both in the past and the present altogether absent in all the human souls including all the founders of the various faiths.*

2. Along with the evolution of these unique divine forces or *Dev Shakties* Bhagwan Dev Atma evolved that unique highest psychic light or *Dev Joti* which was and is absent in all mankind including the so-called religious founders and teachers. As this unique light was altogether absent in mankind, this world remained completely void of the knowledge of those universal truths and principles regarding the nature of soul, its diseases, its degeneration, the horrible results of soul-degeneration, its liberation from those diseases, and its higher evolution, which could be revealed only by *Dev Joti*.

3. The unique highest psychic power or *Dev Tej* which, with the evolution of his highest psychic forces of love of truth and goodness, Bhagwan Dev Atma developed in his soul and which is able, according to the law of Nature, to destroy all low-loves based on happiness and all low-hates, all forms of falsehoods, all forms of evil, etc., was altogether absent in mankind, and it did not manifest itself in any founder or teacher of any the so-called religious system.

4. The true philosophy of true religion based on the bed-rock of Nature's laws and facts, which Bhagwan Dev Atma has been able to bless the world with, on account of his having discovered various truths about soul-life by means of his unique light, had been taught by no founder of any faith, no so-called Deity, no *Rishi*, no *Muni*, no *Tirthanker*, no Buddha, no so-called Prophet, etc. This philosophy was absent in the whole world because all the past or present founders or propagandists of the so-called religions were altogether devoid of *Dev Joti*.

5. The supreme mission of his life, which Bhagwan Dev Atma declared to the world, on account of the evolution in him of the unique highest divine forces of complete love of truth and goodness, was accepted and declared by no founder or teacher of any faith in the world, as none of them possessed those highest psychic loves.

6. The unique example of life in establishing all human and sub-human relations, not on the basis of pleasure and pain, but exclusively on the basis of truth and goodness, which Bhagwan Dev Atma, owing to the evolution in his soul of the highest divine forces, placed before us, and the unique ideal life which he thus lived, was absent all the world over. Such an exemplary and ideal life was shown by no founder of any faith, no teacher, no so-called Prophet, no *Rishi*, *Muni*, *Tirthanker*, etc.; as they were all devoid of the highest psychic powers.

7. All kinds of unique and necessary sacrifices and surrenders, which, Bhagwan Dev Atma made in the furtherance of his unique supreme life-mission, could not be made, and were not consequently made by any founder, teacher, propagandist or apostle of religion, or *Rishi* or *Muni*, or Buddha or *Tirthanker*; as, all of them were bereft of the unique highest divine forces, and could not therefore evolve such a unique Life-Mission.

8. Endowed with his unique light and unique power, which made him in fact a spiritual sun for the darkness-ridden soul-world, Bhagwan Dev Atma brought about such most wonderful higher changes in the lives of thousands of men and women, by imparting to them the unique rays of his unique light and power, and creating thereby in their hearts, higher repulsion and pain for all fiction-grounded beliefs, faiths and evil or sinful acts, and thus liberating them therefrom, as were not and could not be achieved by any so-called prophets, messengers, *Rishies*, *Munies*, *Tirthankers*, Buddha, etc., etc.

9. In spite of the fact that Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed consciousnesses of happiness and pain, he could not in the very nature of things, develop any low-love for happiness or cherish happiness as his goal of life, like human beings inhabiting this earth, since, he possessed the mightiest forces of love of truth and goodness.

10. Since Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed the highest divine forces of love of truth and goodness, he could not, like human souls,

establish relations with human, animal, vegetable and mineral worlds on the basis of happiness, and hence, he did not form any relations on such basis.

11. Possessed of the highest divine forces of love for truth and goodness, it was impossible for Bhagwan Dev Atma to form relations on the basis of happiness, and thus develop improper biases or prejudices like man in general. Hence he did not possess any undue bias or undue attachment for any existence.

12. Possessed of the highest psychic forces of love of truth and goodness, Bhagwan Dev Atma could not become a slave, like the men and women of the world, to any form of happiness, and hence he did not become a slave to it.

Thus Bhagwan Dev Atma is not only the unique manifestation in this world, but is as fundamentally distinct from entire mankind as man is fundamentally distinguishable from the entire animal world.

FUNDAMENTAL DISTINCTION OF DEV ATMA FROM ALL THE SO-CALLED WORSHIPFUL BEINGS.

Humanity believes in many kinds of worshipful beings. These beings in some cases are altogether imaginary, such as God, *Allah*, *Parmatma*, *Parmeshwar*, etc. Some of such worshipful beings again belong to animal, vegetable and mineral worlds, and some are or have been real human beings, possessed of the common human trait of having happiness as their goal. As all of them were devoid of the highest divine forces of the love of truth and goodness which have evolved in Bhagwan Dev Atma, they were not, and could not, be worthy of worship. Hence Bhagwan Dev Atma possesses the same fundamental difference from them as from all other human beings.

VARIOUS LOW-LOVES OF HAPPINESS IN HUMAN SOUL.

The following are the eight major-groups of love for happiness which have developed in mankind :—

1. *Several low-loves for bodily pleasures*—such as (1) love of happiness derived from taste, (2) love of happiness derived from intoxication, (3) love of happiness derived from sexual indulgence, (4) love of happiness derived from idleness etc. All these happiness-affording low-loves make a man an enemy even of his own body, which he loves so much and which he does not wish to be diseased. Still these loves lead him to indulge in intemperance of several kinds so as to harm his own bodily health deliberately, besides suffering various kinds of other losses.

2. *Several pleasure-affording low-loves based on self or ego*—such as (1) love of pleasure obtained from praise by self or others; (2) love of pleasure obtained by getting respect from others; (3) love of pleasure obtained by getting name and fame from others; (4) love of pleasure obtained by gratification of selfishness.

Besides other dangers to which love of self-aggrandizement exposes the individuals, it is responsible for many false beliefs which they, as slaves to it, have created ; such as :—

1. Many departed souls, being slaves to this low-love, have boasted through fit mediums that they have created this earth and possess absolute powers to grant all the wishes of the people of this earth when pleased, and to harm and even destroy them when displeased.

2. Many living souls of this earth too, have, in certain cases, falsely boasted of possessing powers to work miracles or so-called supernatural phenomena and grant all the wishes of the applicants to them and have thus made the illiterate masses their followers.

3. Several persons by falsely declaring themselves to be messengers or prophets of some deity have created false beliefs among millions and made them their followers.

4. Various people of this earth have created blind faith among millions by making false claims that they are closely related to the so-called God and possess the power of getting them full and free pardon of their sins, committed on this earth, from the alleged God and secure a residence for them after death in some place called heaven or paradise, where their sensual desires would be fully realised.

Besides these false beliefs that it creates in men's minds, this love of self-aggrandizement develops vanity or abnormal egoism in people. When this love of self-aggrandizement grows mighty in man, it drags him into a false belief that his body is beautiful, that his physical power is very great, that his intellect is the best, his education is perfect, his creed is the best in the world and that those around him (even though actually superior to him) are much his inferior. Thus he lives in a fool's paradise.

This vanity or abnormal egoism not only lands a man into a delusion of believing untruth for truth, and truth for untruth, but disables him from seeing beauty in any existence outside his narrow self. The world of beautiful virtues that have evolved in various existences, becomes a sealed book to him. As they are utterly blind and cannot see any beauty of character in any human being however high and noble, they lose altogether the capacity for evolving that higher reverence which unlocks the world of the beautiful virtues in noble souls.

This vanity or abnormal egoism makes a man so perverted that he feels that he is completely in the right, when he is utterly in the wrong, and in this perverted condition dares to condemn others who are in the right.

This vanity or abnormal egoism makes it intolerable for its slave even to hear another man praised in his presence. The slaves to it find pleasure in talking ill of others or hearing others talked ill of. As they suffer from this abnormal egoism, they develop low-hate for any and every body who offends their vanity even by truth. It

is this demoniac force that has led the vain people not to tolerate freedom of opinion in others. They have therefore persecuted, tortured, guillotined and burnt those who have thought and believed differently.

This same demoniac force is destructive of corporate life. The race or nation which possesses large number of vain or egoistic men and women who cherish hatred, is bound to remain disunited and disrupted and therefore weak.

To seek only one's own pleasure makes it impossible for man to fit in with discipline. Whenever he finds the orders of his superior opposed to his love of happiness, he would try to follow his own will as against the will of his superior, and would thus develop self-will. This serious soul-malady arising out of the love of selfishness is found in human beings from their childhood to old age. Men possessed of this self-will lose the capacity of working together in order to achieve some common ideal. They are therefore unfit to make a powerful national union and thus develop great national power. Such unfortunate people develop another malady, *i.e.*, obstinacy or wrong persistence in achieving their wrong object. This obstinacy or black-will in a wrong path of life is not confined to any age or clime but is found in *duragrahi* (self-willed) souls of all ages and all lands.

As against this, those who develop the consciousness of any false belief or creed or any degenerating or harmful course of their conduct and put in a determined effort to eschew that, little caring for the opposition; or those getting conscious of the grandeur of any noble cause, stick to it and do not desert it under any temptation or threat of any dear one or combination of persons, are said to be *satyagrahies*. The *duragrahies* degrade a nation and *satyagrahies* elevate it.

Since obstinacy in a wrong path of life is inconsistent with *satyagrah*, and betrays only the slavery of man to his self-will, in the same way hating another person merely for difference of opinion, and led by this hatred to disrespect that person, does not and will not constitute self-respect. *Self-respect is inconsistent with hatred of any person*. It consists of refusing to do any such act as is derogatory to the high position one occupies in any society, religious body, political party or government.

3. *Love of happiness arising out of low attraction for off-springs*. In the course of his evolution from animals, man has acquired parental affection for offsprings. But animal is happily free from the horrible misery and degeneration which are witnessed in man owing to his having become a slave to the happiness arising out of this affection.

Slavery to this low-love compels parents to satisfy any amount of improper wishes of their children and to defend their improper actions which harm both. They grow unjust to some of their own children whom they love less, in order to support another child they love more. They give support to their children even in cases when

they honestly feel their sons to be in the wrong. They sometimes actually help them in the path, they know to be wrong, because the child is obstinatè.

Besides this, they are anxious to give away all their self-acquired money and property even to such of their children who are able to earn and decently maintain themselves and even their children. Slavery to this love makes it impossible for them to gift away their wealth and property to any cause of public good or for the promotion of any noble institution. The children being lost to all sense of self-respect and being victims to love of selfishness, also try their best to wrest all property from their parents and to snatch away even such gift for public good which they may have made.

The slavery to this low-love often compels parents to leave all their belongings even to such of their children who are, to their knowledge, wicked and wasteful in their habits and who have squandered away all they got, even during their life-time.

4. *Low-love of happiness obtainable from wealth and property.*—The greatest harm that this love does to the possessor is that it makes *him believe that mere possession of wealth is an end in itself.*

Besides this mental perversion, a lover of wealth commits various sins and crimes, *viz* :—(1) Steals wealth, jewellery, clothes, etc. (2) Forges false deeds and counterfeit papers or coins. (3) Being a doctor or nurse causes miscarriages of pregnant women. (4) Opens shops for sale of intoxicants. (5) Gambles. (6) Butchers animals for selling their flesh for money. (7) Suppresses things or debts borrowed from others. (8) Makes false statements or publishes false notices in praise of his worthless goods in order to cheat customers of money. (9) Takes bribes from others. (10) Commits highway robberies. (11) Perjures himself in courts of law. (12) Commits dacoities by forcibly entering house, shop or factory of another. (13) Commits murder, being lured to do so by lure of money. (14) Cheats others of money by imposing upon them that he possesses power of foretelling future. (15) Sells his daughters to old people in the name of marriage or for prostitution, or earns money by their prostitution, etc., etc.

Besides these sins which millions commit all over the world due to love of money, there are hundreds of thousands of people who grow misers and cannot part with their hoarded treasures, even in order to meet the needs of their children, or call in the services of a doctor when they or their children are ill. When they grow so stingy and cannot part with money even for their own comfort and health; it is idle to expect them to give anything in charity.

5. *Low-love for happiness obtained by acquired beliefs, by association and formed habits.*—From his very birth, human child assimilates many impressions, beliefs and practices of his parents, guardians, and surrounding environment. As a child born, say, in a Hindu home he learns from them to call his parents *Mata Pita* and his relations as sister, brother, uncle, aunt, grandfather, grand-

mother, etc., etc. From them he learns what his caste, community, creed or nationality is. He accepts from them their gods, goddesses, etc., and their various religious beliefs. He takes all these to be true and puts his faith in them. From them he accepts his modes of eating, drinking, fashions in dress and manners. Believing all these to be right he tries to act accordingly and develops various habits. Besides this, he believes as his own, only those in whose midst he lives and breathes, while he takes all outside this circle, as strangers. Gradually he feels great attachment for his received beliefs and opinions, formed habits and close relatives and develops deep love for them.

This love is harmful in various ways. It is this which makes a human child assimilate altogether false beliefs and become attached to them. It is due to this that millions of human children learn to take *bhang*, opium, tobacco, wine and such other intoxicants. They learn to take flesh and eggs. They wrongly learn to treat those outside their caste as inferior. They hate those who differ from their beliefs, their ways of life, their caste, etc.

Besides this some develop such an attachment for their environments or their place of birth that they would not change them even for improving their crumbling financial condition or wrecked health or for the purposes of travel. They cling so tenaciously to their relatives that they find it impossible to separate from them even though they suffer calamities at their hands.

Thus the happiness that they derive from the attachment to their received beliefs and superstitions, acquired habits or modes of life, and their relatives in whose midst they live and grow, makes them slaves to those beliefs howsoever false, practices howsoever harmful, relatives howsoever irritating and annoying they may be; and thus they bring untold sufferings and harm on themselves.

Again, in certain cases it is kinship of natures or dispositions that draws men to each other and leads to attachments. It is well-known that birds of the feather flock together. While vicious people co-operate in vice, persons of higher nature also get drawn towards each other and by mutual co-operation promote their own welfare and the cause they uphold.

These attachments formed on the basis of kinship of natures, develop in their hearts, also wrong biases or prejudices. They accept false recommendations of their associates, and believe in their wrong complaints against others and, thus form wrong and unjust opinions against others. They thus become unjust and harmful in various relations.

6. *Low-love of happiness derived from violence or "Hinsa."*—When any man feels pleasure in torturing or giving pain to any other man or animal or subjecting them to any harm or loss, with the intention of making them miserable, he is said to possess low-love for violence or "*Hinsa*." Such a man gratifies his low-love by causing annoyance to another man or animal, teasing a child or a

boy or a girl so as to make him or her weep, agonizing any man or animal by trifling with their life or rights, or destroying wantonly, some things belonging to another. Love of violence makes a hunter kill not only for food, but even for the mere pleasure of killing, birds and animals. It is this love which drives its possessor to make another a target of his gibes and jeers and ridicules of various kinds.

7. *Low-love of happiness derived from cherishing false beliefs.*—Various kinds of temptations and fears to which man is a prey, expose credulous persons to easily fall into the snares of such men who, knowing their such weakness, hold forth before them, false beliefs which may be calculated to satisfy their one or other temptation or mitigate their fears, and these people feel pleasure in cherishing such false beliefs.

A man who is a slave to this low-love, believes such false stories to be true, which he is told, would enhance his riches. This is why *sadhus* and others cheat such people by claiming the power to convert base metal into gold, or change currency notes of lesser value to those of higher value.

In the same way, fear of pain leads man to put faith in fearful stories invented by others to terrify him. This is how children are silenced by being told that bogey man would get them. This is why even sensible persons put faith in the efficacy of imprecations or curses.

This is why the departed souls, after their departure from this earth and being led by the love of happiness, possessed fit mediums, and through them created, in men and women living on this earth, false impressions that they possessed great powers to grant their wishes or inflict pain on them, and thus induced them to propitiate them. This led to those innumerable false beliefs which are called religious beliefs and which hold millions in their fell grip even to-day.

Later on, belief in various kinds of heavens and hells was also created by these departed souls. When they saw that some people were not influenced by the hopes they held forth and the fears they caused them, they indulged in fibs that those who offend them and thus commit sins, would be put into hell after death, and those who obeyed and gratified them, would be placed in heaven.

Thus beliefs in gods or goddesses, in their powers and claims, in the efficacy of offerings and prayers made to them, in the efficacy of their blessings and curses, the existence of heaven and hell, have originated and form the religious beliefs of millions.

Besides these beliefs, several smart people, finding this business very paying, created other gods and goddesses from amongst the inanimate objects, such as the sun, the moon, the Ganges, the Jamna, and trees such as, banyan and *peepal*, etc., and invented lots of goddesses, such as *Kali*, *Jwala Mukhi*, *Saraswati*, *Lakshmi*, etc.

It is because man possesses inordinate love for happiness and is terribly ignorant of the laws of Nature, that we find the reign of false beliefs in mankind which has proved disastrous for him. Not only does man degenerate his soul by such beliefs, but wastes his money and property in their service.

It is the love of these false beliefs and false teachings which is responsible for the massacre of countless innocent human and animal existences and their tortures.

It is the love of these false beliefs which has produced millions of such *sadhus*, *faqirs*, saints, *mahants*, *pandas*, devotees, priests, etc., who receive millions of rupees in the shape of charity. These vast amounts, if devoted to the public institutions for the physical, educational and moral welfare of humanity, would produce innumerable blessings.

8. *Love of higher happiness derived from altruistic feelings.*—When any man possesses a feeling or consciousness to perceive the physical pain or malady or mental ignorance of those with whom he is not connected on the basis of any low-love of happiness, and endeavours to remove them, or is moved to eradicate any really false or harmful custom, superstition or usage, and in all such endeavours, he is not moved by the consideration of winning public applause or any title, post, power or hope of going to heaven after death, but *is moved purely by the feeling of doing good and makes various kinds of sacrifices for such work, he is said to possess purely altruistic or unselfish feeling.* When such altruistic feeling of his grows so mighty, that it possesses him completely and moves him to regularly and always make all kinds of sacrifices needed in its service, and makes him contented with the higher satisfaction that accompanies the gratification of such a love itself, he is said to possess love for altruistic happiness.

This higher love is found in very exceptional cases in mankind, for, it demands a very high and elevated life of sacrifice. A man is said to possess purely altruistic feeling when he manifests the following condition of heart, *i.e.*, (1) he feels pain in his own heart when he sees another in pain or misery or suffering from any want or when he hears about it; (2) and moved by that pain, he actually does something in order to mitigate that pain or misery or want of the sufferer; (3) and in doing so he not only expects no approbation or even verbal thanks for his services; (4) but persists in his noble endeavour even in the face of abuses, ingratitude and calumny that may be showered on him; (5) and feels not in the least discouraged in his self-imposed noble task because it is a thankless task. These conditions, when fulfilled, show that the man really possesses the altruistic force or higher love of mercy.

Those scientists again, are also altruistic, who are moved by the higher love of discovering truths in any department of Nature, make

sacrifice of their body, time, money, etc., in its service and cherish no lower feeling of gaining the satisfaction of selfish ends.

But these altruistic feelings even in their pure form do sometimes bring about evil. A judge moved by his feeling of mercy, acquits a true criminal. A founder of an institution permits teaching of beliefs and superstitions which are opposed to facts and laws of Nature, and this helps in misguiding souls into the abyss of false beliefs and sinful practices.

A scientist who has done really great services in any department of Nature, throws the weight of his authority in upholding a false dogma, and thus becomes the means of misleading men.

But in spite of these disadvantages, altruistic love yields great blessings for the good of mankind.

The highest form of altruistic work consists in imparting to fit souls, the unique higher influences of Bhagwan Dev Atma which dispel soul-darkness, and impart true soul-knowledge, revealing the horror of low-loves and low-hates and the beauty of altruistic loves; and liberate man from the bondage of low-loves and low-hates and develop altruistic loves.

The noblest work of bringing fit souls to the feet of Bhagwan Dev Atma, the fountain of these higher influences comprising his unique light and unique power, is the most essential one, as it is calculated to promote all other kinds of philanthropic work. Those therefore who help such a cause with money and property and by making all kinds of sacrifices of fame, name, power, position, health of body, etc., do the highest good of their own souls and of others.

VARIOUS LOW-HATES IN HUMAN SOUL.

Man struggles to gratify various kinds of low-loves, which he possesses. He, therefore, feels hatred for any such person, animal or other object which obstructs him in that gratification. When led by this hatred a man finds delight in inflicting harm on the object of his hatred or inducing others to subject him to harm or in hearing reports that the object of his hatred has come to grief, he develops love for the gruesome happiness derived from the satisfaction of such low-hates. These low-hates grow in the heart of man from the following four causes :—

1. *Due to disappointment in having any desired happiness realised at the hands of any body else.*—When a man finds another not co-operating with him in the gratification of any of his happiness-affording desire—however baneful that desire may be for his own self or others—or when he finds, that others do not help him in the satisfaction of even an illegitimate desire of his, he gets a severe shock and pain; and being overpowered by this shock and ignorant of his true welfare, he harbours hatred for such person or persons.

2. *Due to undue attachments.*—When a person gets attached with himself or his relations, his community or nation, he develops a

spirit of partisanship, and such attachment of his becomes undue attachment. In this state of his heart he feels wounded, if any body exposes any of his own true defect, sin or crime, or the defect, sin or crime of those with whom he is unduly attached, he feels shocked, and harbours hatred towards such a man.

3. *Due to low-love for self, ego or "I."*—When a man develops so much low-love of self that it becomes intolerable for him even to hear any other person praised or considered superior to him in any line, he develops hatred for such a person and those praising him.

4. *Due to love for falsehood.*—When a man develops strong biases for some false beliefs or superstitions which he loves and cherishes, he hates others, because :—

(1) they do not believe as he believes, or do not belong to his creed or party ;

(2) they follow different fashions in dress and daily living ;

(3) they feel him inferior to themselves ;

(4) they have different colour, caste or calling.

Following are the symptoms by which one can know the presence of this low-hate in any soul :—

When any man wants—

(1) that everyone should gratify his desire, howsoever wicked or illegitimate it may be ;

(2) that none should cherish a belief or follow a creed different from his own, even though his beliefs and creeds may be positively false and harmful ; and that none should express his true or right opinion against them ;

(3) that none should be held, believed or declared to be superior to him, and none should be praised or respected more than he ;

(4) that none should declare, hold or believe him to be inferior, even when he possesses true defects, or is guilty of any wickedness.

DEGENERATION OF HUMAN SOUL.

When any existence in Nature takes a downward course from its normal or better condition, and grows lower, it is said to have degenerated. Similarly, when any human soul sinks lower, it is said to have degenerated. As for example, a man who was not addicted to *bhang*, begins to take *bhang* ; he was not addicted to drink but commences to drink ; he was not a debauchee but becomes one ; he was not dishonest in trade but becomes one ; he could gladly hear his defects from a well-wisher of his, but now he resents it and hates him who endeavours to show him his true condition ; in all these and various other cases, man degenerates his soul. He also degenerates, as a soul when he cherishes false beliefs, when he grows insincere, a hypocrite, and develops selfishness or love of ego, etc.

In fact, *when a man, led by his various low-loves of happiness and low-hates, indulges in various falsehoods and wrongs, he sinks lower and grows degenerated in soul.* These various low-loves and low-hates, are root cause of all the forms of evils, sins and crimes practised by man in relation to human and sub-human kingdoms of Nature.

VARIOUS FALSEHOODS.

The falsehoods which prevail in mankind, can be grouped under four heads :—

1. *Various falsehoods practised through beliefs* pertaining to the true existence of Nature, its immutable laws, the true nature of human soul and of other existences.

2. *Falsehoods practised through thoughts*, which a man cherishes, when he has to hide his real sins ; when he has to harm a man whom he hates ; when he has to attract somebody to himself or when he has to deceive some one to fulfil any of his objects.

3. *Falsehoods practised through speech or expression.*—When a man expresses through words of mouth or writing in prose or poetry, the falsehoods he cherishes, in order to serve some object.

4. *Falsehoods practised through actions.*—When a man uses outward symbols of a religion, professes faith in a creed and forms a society on its basis, performs rites and ceremonies and outwardly worships a god or goddess, etc., against his knowledge and belief, he is said to indulge in this form of falsehood.

It is inevitable for man to cherish these falsehoods so long as he is led by his various low-loves and low-hates. When a man longs to have his love of happiness gratified, and sees that a falsehood would facilitate its gratification, he adopts it. When these falsehoods make him successful in his gratification, he sings songs in praise of them, and trains his children also in them and, lures others to practise falsehood. *It is these low-loves and low-hates which have led to false religious faiths.*

All these false beliefs militate against the facts and laws of Nature, and those who cherish and practise them, become *mithiacharis* (addicted to falsehood.)

From his very childhood, man learns to put faith in falsehoods. He is born quite ignorant. When he learns to understand language, he blindly accepts all that he is told. He is in a condition to put absolute blind faith on the words of his elders. If he is told that his small-pox is the visitation of a goddess, he believes in it. If he is told that all physical maladies are sent by his dead ancestors, he takes it for granted. If he is told that stars and planets send diseases, he quietly accepts that. If he is told that animal sacrifices offered before an idol in a temple, would propitiate the idol, he credulously accepts it to be true.

In the same way, he accepts beliefs in a creator, in the dogma of rebirths, in the stories of heaven and hell, and lots of other things, such as polygamy, *Niyog*, religious, wars, *jehads*, etc. *Thus human child drinks deep in the atmosphere of falsehood, and develops attraction or even love for it.* He not only accepts falsehoods, but with age and advancement of his faculties he himself fabricates them. This he does, in order to obtain wealth, woman, false praise or to hide his relations' real crimes, etc.

Again it is not necessary that a man should always receive any legal punishment for the falsehoods he fabricates. A man may indulge in falsehoods of which law does not take him to account. But all the same he inevitably degenerates by indulging in them. Suppose a man has come to believe certain rites and ceremonies to be unfounded, certain received religious beliefs to be false, certain usages to be antagonistic to truth, certain claims made by him about his family status to be untrue, and yet he deliberately indulges in them. He is not punished in the court of law but his soul degenerates all the same.

But if a man receives during his childhood, any false belief from his guardians and honestly believes in that and propagates it, he does not become thereby a lover of falsehood. But his soul degenerates all the same, if influenced by that belief, he does an evil act in relation to others or inspires others to do so. Suppose a man has from his childhood imbibed beliefs that it is right to kill animals, eat their flesh, marry during the life-time of the first wife, hate others for difference of opinion, etc., he degenerates his soul-life very much when he puts these beliefs into practice. But if his beliefs are innocent and lead to no positive evil, he does not degenerate as much though he suffers by living in the world of ignorance and darkness from which he should endeavour hard to come out. Thus a belief that this earth is supported by a snake or bullock, or that the sun revolves round the earth, or that the earth is flat as a pancake, etc., does not generally lead man to evil actions, nor do they in themselves make him a *lover* of falsehood.

Writing a fiction as a piece of literature does not make a man a lover of falsehood, provided he does not teach anything opposed to the laws of Nature or anything which instigates the readers to evil actions or sinful practices. In the same way, an actor who personates a character in a drama does not become a lover of falsehood by that action and does not degenerate his soul, provided his personation is not intended to disrespect another or prove harmful to any society or class.

But as against that, a man becomes *mithiachari* when he fabricates a lie even to bring to book any thief or a dacoit.

In short the moral principle for the guidance of men in this line, is, that so long a man guided by his strong imagination does not intentionally, by word of mouth or a composed poem or written article or published book or by sermon, propagate something which leads any man into the mire of falsehoods and makes him mithiachari or

inspires a thought in others to commit various acts of injustice and wrong in relation to human or sub-human existences *he does not become a mithiachari*. Barring the above-mentioned evil intention he can use his imagination as best as he can in his own service or the service of others.

SOUL-DEGENERATION FROM UNJUST THOUGHTS AND ACTS.

The thoughts and acts by means of which man, led mainly by any of his low-loves and low-hates, tramples upon the Nature-given legitimate rights of his own self or of any other living or non-living existence, are called unjust or usurpatory thoughts and actions. These can be grouped under four heads, *viz* :—

1. Such thoughts of man in relation to any existence of any living or non-living world of Nature, which *prejudice* its legitimate or just rights.

2. Imparting by any man of such teachings to any other man or an animal which may lead him to harm the just rights of any other existence.

3. Such acts of man in relation to his own organised body as materially harm its health, when they are *not* done in obedience to a call of some higher duty or true service of others, but are solely due to his low-loves or low-hates.

4. All such *acts* of man as tend to harm the just rights of any living or non-living existence in Nature.

It is in fact inevitable for a man, who is enslaved by low-loves and low-hates, to cherish unjust thoughts and do evil or wrong deeds in relation to various existences of Nature; and these unjust thoughts and wrong deeds inevitably generate various soul-diseases and degenerate his soul-life.

Man generally transgresses or usurps the just rights of himself and others in respect of (1) Wealth, (2) Property and possessions, (3) Honour, (4) Name and fame, (5) Health, (6) Form or features, (7) Quality, (8) Right happiness, (9) Right peace of mind, (10) Power or vitality, (11) Natural span of life, (12) Life itself, (13) Right position, (14) Bodily limb or organ, and (15) True belief.

All the above usurpations or acts of transgression are called sinful. It is inevitable for all people, on becoming slaves to any pleasure-affording low-love or low-hate, to commit these various evil acts and to teach others to commit the same—be they called by whatever name—*Mahatma, Maha Rishi, Rishi, Saint, Sadhu, Mahant, Buddha, Tirthanker, Acharya, Guru, Nabi, Pir, Wali, etc.*, or even gods, God, *Parmatma, Ishwar*, or any incarnation, prophet, devotee or friend of them.

Some such so-called gods are in many cases far more degenerated than man, and deserve worse punishment than that which they are supposed to award to the so-called sinners.

Soul-degeneration of man is not due purely to the commission of legalised crimes or wrongs, but is also due even to such wrong acts of which law takes no cognisance *viz.*, (1) Indulging in *speculation* in order to get rich quickly and with that object borrowing money from others which one fails to pay and loses his own capital, (2) *Hunting* animals or otherwise teasing men and animals, (3) *Contributing nothing* out of ones hoarded wealth to any good cause owing to his slavery to wealth, (4) Giving away ones self-earned property to his bad or undeserving sons or others owing to undue attachment, (5) Marrying during the life-time of husband or wife, (6) Marrying children without their consent, (7) Using intoxicants and inducing or compelling others to use them, (8) Taking flesh, (9) Failing to keep right engagements, etc.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOUL-DEGENERATION.

Following four great characteristics are the symptomatic evidence of soul-degeneration :—

I. HARD-HEARTEDNESS AND CONSEQUENT SOUL-DARKNESS OR SOUL-BLINDNESS.

When a man cherishes low-loves of happiness as the ideal of his life and thus becomes slave to them, and uses his powers of thought and action in the service of such love forces and thus follows the path of falsehoods and evils which militate against the great law of evolution (as it demands solely the adoption of the path of truth and goodness), he fosters in his soul, a degenerated condition which steadily robs him of the capacity of apprehending truths of his soul-life, when he has got such capacity. By and by on losing such capacity altogether, he becomes totally blind. *This utterly blind condition of soul is called hard-heartedness.*

This state permanently bars the passage of that blessed light into one's soul, which is called *Dev Joti* and thus one is incapacitated to see those most precious truths regarding the nature of one's soul, its diseases, its cure from these soul-diseases, its higher life-promoting higher forces and the methods of evolving them, etc., etc., which truths *Dev Joti* alone reveals to man.

This is not the only loss to him. Such souls completely *lose even a desire* for that light, because the gratification of their low-loves of happiness does not pain them. Nay, they love to enjoy the happiness which they derive from these low-loves and thus, *like moths, they are content to be burnt up at the altar of their low-loves.*

II. PERVERSION OF VISION.

A man is said to suffer from the malady of perverted vision when he sees things in Nature in a perverted perspective, *i.e.*, he sees falsehood to be truth and truth to be falsehood, and evil as good and good as evil. He views Nature itself in an altogether wrong light. In Nature he lives, moves and has his being. His own being is a

part of Nature and depends for its existence on Nature's laws. He degenerates himself when he violates the laws of Nature. He grows better when he follows those laws. That is to say he lives or dies by obeying or defying the laws of Nature. Such is man's most intimate relation with Nature. And yet many of those who become prey to perverted vision :—

(a) believe everything in Nature to be a manifestation of force which is eternal and self-existent, and do not believe matter also to be eternal and self-existent, but consider it to be a manifestation of force ;

(b) believe everything in Nature to be a manifestation of matter which is eternal and self-existing, and do not believe energy or force to be eternal and self-existent, but believe it to be a manifestation of matter ;

(c) *do not believe themselves to be a part of the whole Nature* and hence bound imperatively to obey the laws of their life by following the Nature's evolutionary course, but make light of Nature and its laws and treat it at most as mere means for gratifying their various low-loves of happiness ;

(d) being able-bodied and quite capable of doing work, *consider their welfare to consist in living a "do-nothing" life and view the life of active work as harmful to their existence ;*

(e) *consider the utility of life to consist in hoarding money and acquiring property, and view their miserliness, which disables them from using their money even for their own and their relatives' needs, as really conducive to their good and the contrary position as harmful ;*

(f) consider it more beneficial to dedicate all their wealth, their property, their power, their knowledge, their art, etc., at the altar of their own children or other blood relations, than to spend them in part or whole in any department of public welfare or any unselfish good cause ;

(g) *do not realise any harm in adopting low and degrading ways of life, (i.e., insincerity, hypocrisy, cheating, treachery, breach of faith, injustice, cruelty and various other sins and crimes, etc.) but talk proudly of their smartness and wisdom in doing such acts ;*

(h) consider it a better bargain to utilise all the patrimony left by their ancestors in furthering their own low happiness or that of others related to them, than to dedicate it for the soul-welfare of their ancestors or for any cause of public service. This they do in spite of the fact that they are able enough to earn for themselves and their dependents ;

(i) develop low-loves for various happinesses of which they are conscious, and led by these low-loves they consider happiness to be their goal of life and the only ideal of their existence, even when that is antagonistic to goodness ;

(j) being altogether ignorant of the truths of the nature of soul, its degeneration due to low-loves and low-hates, its true salvation

from these degenerating forces, its true higher evolution, etc., feel, under the influence of their cherished false beliefs, all those persons to be misguided who have received Bhagwan Dev Atma's true soul-revealing light and have, therefore to some extent, assimilated truths of *Satya Dharm* ;

(k) being prey to low-loves and low-hates cannot bear to hear, even from their greatest benefactor, anything against their cherished low-loves, and get exasperated when they hear any such talk, and, in their perverted state, they view such a benefactor to be their enemy and those with whom they are bound up by low ties as their friends ;

(i) being victims to their self-love or vanity feel those who are really superior to them in knowledge and life, to be inferior to them, when they themselves are very much inferior to them.

III. UNNECESSARY PAINS OR SUFFERINGS.

(a) *Most harmful bodily sufferings ending sometimes in premature death.*—Millions of people being slaves to low-loves of taste, of intoxicants, of lust, and of idleness, do great injustice to their own bodily organism and wreck many of their vital organs. They become prey to various diseases which at times grow so unbearable that the patients find relief in suicide. But even when they do not lay violent hands on their own bodies, their condition becomes highly miserable on account of the several maladies.

This state of things can be observed all over the world in all grades of humanity.

(b) *Most harmful sufferings of soul owing to undue attachments.*—Millions of husbands and wives get so deeply attached to each other on the basis of low-loves or to their sons and daughters and even grand-children or to their houses, lands, wealth, ornaments, cattle and such other things, that if, by any chance, they get separated from them or lose them altogether, they feel so much tortured and restless that they pass very miserable existence. In several cases they court or invite premature end.

(c) *Most harmful sufferings due to disappointed hopes or wishes.*—One can witness all over the world in all classes of people the most harrowing instances of unnecessary sufferings and excruciating pains which, in some cases, end in suicide on account of disappointed hopes.

Millions of people suffer acute disappointment when they are not able to get a specified mate in marriage, or when they get no issue, or get no son, or do not get rich according to their dreams or a high social or political status they long after, or a high place in a university test. Hundreds of persons suffer the pangs of frustrated hopes when they do not get the woman or man they love, or when they get condemnation from a quarter they least expect or

from where they expected praise, or when they get no source of maintenance, or when they do not get cured of their maladies, or when they meet with disloyalty or faithlessness from friends or loved ones, so on and so forth.

These foiled hopes and frustrated wishes bring a storm of sufferings on men under the stress or violence of which they, in many cases, succumb.

(d) *Most harmful sufferings due to false superstitious beliefs.*—From his childhood, man as a rule, is brought up in an atmosphere of false beliefs to which, in millions of cases, he becomes so hopelessly attached that he is not able to shake them off and consequently he suffers. Thousands of women, being desirous for a child, suffer lot of calamities at the hands of quacks whose poisonous drugs they take, or scheming rogues to whose viles they succumb and thus suffer. Thousands lose their money or ornaments, etc., and create other troubles for themselves by their false beliefs in the efficacy of magic, etc.

Hundreds being prey to their false belief of getting some paradise after death, subject their bodies to unnecessary and acute sufferings or *taps*, go on pilgrimage to far-off places and suffer in money, time and bodily health. Many men fascinated by the so-called marvels of *yoga* adopt practices which develop several physical maladies in them or wreck their bodily health, etc., etc.

The victims of the sufferings of these false beliefs can be found all over the world.

(e) *Most harmful sufferings due to jealousy.*—Man suffers the acute pains of jealousy when he cannot bear any person being even duly praised in his presence, or rising superior to him in education, social position, wealth, happiness, etc. Such a person goes to the extreme of inflicting pain or suffering on the object of his jealousy, if, besides jealousy, he possesses a feeling of vindictiveness.

Thousands can be seen all over the world who suffer the evil consequences of this soul malady of jealousy.

(f) *Most harmful sufferings due to vindictiveness.*—Feeling of vindictiveness becomes excited when the vindictive person gets disappointed in his wishes at the hands of another. He is upset and endeavours himself or through others to harm the person and thus ease his revengeful nature. Millions suffer from this horrible soul-malady and feel impelled to declare that their burning heart would not feel satisfied unless they harm even their great benefactors.

(g) *Most harmful sufferings due to vanity.*—Millions led by vanity consider themselves superior to others in matters in which they are actually inferior to them, or pose to be better informed in matters relating to which they possess no true knowledge, and thereby attach undue importance to their self, with the result that even if their greatest benefactor reveals to them any of their true weaknesses or defects or lack of some virtue in them they become upset and

feel tortured. This degenerating force several times involves persons in various troubles and unnecessary complications. Inflated by this vanity, and in order to show their physical superiority, many people come to grips with such powerful persons or animals as crush them or overpower them in physical combats and thus they suffer in various ways. This vanity is the source of horrible troubles for millions all over the world.

(h) *Most harmful sufferings due to evil acts or crimes.*—Low-love of wealth and property leads millions to commit thefts, robberies, dacoities, forgeries, murders, etc. Similarly, various other low-loves lead people to commit other trespasses and crimes, which all bring on their heads various calamities including imprisonment or gallows. This drama of very painful misery is also witnessed all over the world.

IV—WASTAGE OF SOUL-VITALITY AND ULTIMATE SOUL ANNIHILATION.

As physical maladies of man, besides subjecting him to sufferings, prejudicially affect his vitality also, and if any of these diseases continues unchecked, his vitality is reduced to a point when the vital organs cease to function, and thus end his bodily life; in the same way, the soul-vitality of man is also prejudicially affected by the soul-maladies produced by his happiness-based low-loves and low-hates and if the course of any soul-malady continues unchecked, the vitality of soul or his constructive power reaches a point when it is not able to keep itself alive and so gets annihilated.

But even when a man does not suffer from bodily diseases, he has to daily take food, water, light and air to recoup his daily spent-up energy, otherwise he suffers the natural consequences of weakness and ultimate death. In the same way, soul-vitality in man is to be recouped every day. *The law of recouping soul-vitality consists in doing daily unselfish service of others.* This is possible only if one is motivated by one or many altruistic forces. Now if man is void of these higher forces which may enable him to think thoughts or do deeds conducive to the development of constructive power of his soul, he cannot escape the natural consequences of the growing weakness and ultimate extinction.

That the vitality or constructive power of a soul is getting decreased day by day can be known by the following symptoms:—

1. *Loss of the force of higher repulsion.*—If a man possesses real and higher repulsion for any evil or sin by which he is able to resist some temptation to commit that evil or sin, and thus protect himself from degenerating his soul by such evil thoughts and acts, he is said to possess a higher hate. But if this man adopts such courses of life as tend to decrease that higher hate, he will not only by and by cease to resist those evil thoughts and acts, but, on continuing in that course, would begin to welter in their mire. In that case it is clear that he has altogether lost the feeling of that higher hate in him.

2. *Loss of the force of higher pain.*—If a man who used to feel pain or burning when he happened to think such thoughts or commit such acts as are harmful to him, and who therefore endeavoured to protect himself from them in future, gradually reaches such a state of heart that he feels *no pain* or burning on thinking harmful thoughts or perpetrating harmful acts, but on the contrary, *finds joy* in them; such a change in him clearly shows that he has lost the feeling of higher pain.

One can find examples of various people who once possessed the feeling of such higher pain that on becoming conscious of any sinful or unjust deed of theirs, they felt deep remorse for it and could find rest only by confessing such a sin of theirs to their victims, apologising to them and otherwise making due amends to them; but a time came in their lives when they ceased to feel any remorse on committing sinful or evil deeds, and could neither confess their sins, nor make any amends for them. This clearly shows the destruction of this higher soul-force in them by which they could redeem themselves from their sins.

3. *Loss of higher love or feeling for higher happiness.*—Higher reverence, gratitude, unselfish service or others, etc., are all higher feelings and their gratification yields higher happiness and the evolution of soul. Now if a man *once able to receive the Dev Joti* (unique psychic light) of Bhagwan Dev Atma and to see the beauty of one or other highest psychic forces of Bhagwan, and thus, not only to feel attraction for it, but a powerful impulse to strengthen his reverence and thus enjoy higher happiness, *suddenly or gradually ceases to receive that light* or to feel that attraction for Bhagwan's highest psychic forces or to realise the value of reverence and its higher joys; he shows by such change in him that he has destroyed his higher feeling of reverence and love for its higher happiness. Similarly, a man who once possessed the higher feeling of gratitude or that of unselfish service of others and found higher joy in doing various acts to gratify them, but afterwards ceases to perform them for any reason, he proves to have destroyed these higher feelings.

4. *Destruction of the constructive power of soul.*—According to the eternal law of Nature, a soul can function and live only when it is able to build and maintain its body. This body-building power is called the constructive power of soul. It is destroyed by downward courses of life produced by low-loves and low-hates. It is developed by various thoughts and acts of doing good, moved by higher loves and higher repulsions. Hence a man who is not able to get freedom from degrading courses of life and is not able to evolve, or, even being able, does not get conditions suited for such evolution, he begins to lose his constructive power. If this course continues unchecked, he loses his constructive power altogether and along with it loses his whole individuality.

It is imperative duty of every human being that he should save himself from his own and Nature's destructive powers and develop

higher and constructive forces of heart, if he wants to live and develop. If a human soul does not possess capacity or willingness to get freedom from destructive forces and to evolve the higher forces of heart which lead a soul to prove serviceable to others, it is bound to lose gradually its constructive power and end its existence.

THE TRUE METHOD OF SALVATION.

Low-loves and low-hates lead man invariably to any amount of falsehoods and evils with the result that he offends against the universal evolutionary law of Nature, on which the safety of the constructive power of soul depends and thus degenerates himself.

It is again inevitable that so long as man loves falsehoods and evil practices and does not develop strong or adequate repulsion for them, on the basis of soul-consciousness, he is bound to cling to them and never get permanent freedom from them.

This higher repulsion, which alone can give man freedom from any falsehood or evil, can evolve in a fit soul when he, on the one hand gets *Dev Joti* which may reveal to him the ugly and harmful nature of that falsehood or evil, and, on the other, gets *Dev Tej* which may enable him to resist the temptation of pleasure afforded by that falsehood or evil, till his attraction for it may be annihilated. This *Dev Joti* and this *Dev Tej* can only be had from their fountain-head, Bhagwan Dev Atma.

But every soul cannot receive these unique blessings of *Dev Joti* and *Dev Tej* from Bhagwan Dev Atma. Only fit or receptive souls can get them under suitable conditions. Leaving these receptive souls, all other men of whatever class, creed, colour or station of life, must live and die enveloped in soul-darkness and prey to the snare of false faiths. Such unfortunate souls can never get liberty from their low-loves and low-hates which have enslaved them, as they are unable to get *Dev Joti* and *Dev Tej* which alone can give them freedom.

A man who is responsive can get freedom from certain evils or falsehoods pertaining to physical or worldly matters, through any other person who may have repulsion for them. Thus a man can get freedom from any of his harmful acts respecting his bodily health, his money or property, his social status, etc., through any other capable person. *But it is impossible for a man, though otherwise capable, to get freedom from soul-darkness and false beliefs regarding soul-organism and soul-life and soul-degenerating harmful thoughts and acts, save by the alchemy of Bhagwan Dev Atma's highest psychic influences.* In the same way, it is impossible for him to evolve true higher forces and higher life in his soul to his highest capacity, without reverential union with Bhagwan Dev Atma.

A fit person continues to receive these blessings so long as he *possesses real desire* to have them, and *daily performs such exercises* as enable him to establish heart-communion with Bhagwan Dev Atma directly or by association with higher souls having such communion.

Higher repulsion when awakened in a man for one or the other falsehood or evil destroys his attraction for it and he is free from it for the future. But higher repulsion does not get a man freedom from the past impurities of his falsehoods and evils. For example, a man is given to bribes-taking and has been getting money by bribes. Higher repulsion can apply a brake to it so that he may renounce this practice for future. But it cannot by itself enable him to make retribution of his previously ill-gotten money. However if that fit soul gets more of *Dev Prabhavas* and gradually develops a consciousness that the money that he has got by illegal means is *not his*, and that he *has no right or claim to it*, and *feels pain at retaining it* any longer, *he becomes prepared to disgorge the poison*. Thus impelled he returns the ill-gotten money to the owners, and gets freedom from the impurity of his wrong acts and makes his soul pure. This is called *Hani-Parishodh*, i.e., making amends for wrongs done and is only possible by the development of higher pain.

This *Hani-Prishodh* is possible only when higher pain is developed in fit souls. Hundreds of cases of this kind have taken place in Dev Samaj.

This is not true only of bribes-taking but all forms of wrong. *Atam Shuddhi* is impossible without higher pain in relation to all impurities accumulated in souls by their evil or false practices. This *Atam Shuddhi* is necessary even when one has indulged only in evil thoughts but not in any evil practices, because evil thoughts also harden human heart, generate soul darkness and cause soul-degeneration.

This higher repulsion and higher pain can be evolved only in such fit souls who can receive *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

THE TRUE METHOD OF EVOLUTION OF HIGHER LIFE IN MAN.

For the evolution of higher life in his soul, it is imperative for every man to evolve two sets of higher or altruistic forces in absence whereof no man can step into the world of higher life.

Out of these two sets of these higher forces the one consists of those various altruistic feelings which lead one to selfless or disinterested service of others. Some mention of these feelings has already been made.

These feelings of unselfish service can evolve in man only (1) when he gets in *heredity the germs* of those feelings, and (2) when he gets *suitable conditions* in Nature for their evolution. In absence of either of these conditions, none of these feelings can evolve in man.

It is true that some persons are born with a heritage of the germs of one or other of these higher powers. But even in such persons, these germs cannot evolve as a matter of course. They must get some favourable conditions in time to evolve them, i.e., before these

germs lose their vitality completely. These potentialities or germs of higher life die away if they do not get suitable conditions for their growth in time, as grains of wheat, barley, gram, etc., gradually lose their life-power, if they are not put into suitable conditions for their growth up to a certain period of time.

By suitable conditions we mean the effective help of those objective forces of Nature, which can evolve the external living form and internal potential powers of the life-force of a plant, animal or man. These favourable conditions do not fall to the lot of all the life-forces. Those living existences, which do not get such favourable environments or suitable conditions or materials which are necessary for their evolution, gradually wither away and die.

In accordance with this immutable law of Nature, human souls which, from their very birth, breathe in an atmosphere of unfavourable conditions, destroy the very germs of higher life if they have got any of them in heredity. How deplorable is their lot!

Thus both heredity and suitable conditions determine the course of higher life in man.

Again he alone can make continual progress in the path of higher life who (1) possesses the progressive higher capacity and (2) is able to establish permanent relation with that unique manifestation who possesses those all-sided true highest psychic forces which are necessary :—

1. to evolve in a fit soul to the fullest possible extent any altruistic higher force which may have made some start in his life to some extent ;
2. to evolve besides the above, other higher forces of which that person may have got the germs, but for the evolution of which he may not have had suitable conditions ;
3. to give that person true salvation from his soul-darkness and from his various low-loves and low-hates which inevitably generate soul-darkness, by imparting to him the rays of his unique light and unique power and thus creating higher repulsion against them ;
4. to evolve in that person the instinctive realization about the truths relating to the nature and organism of soul, its degeneration, etc., and thus impart to him the knowledge of true *Dharma*, and to create in him attraction for those truths by following which he can increase his constructive power.

Such a divine soul is Bhagwan Dev Atma whose highest psychic forces bring about highest changes in souls.

The second group of the higher feelings, essential for the evolution of higher life in man, consists of those altruistic forces which enable a fit human soul to establish his permanent relation with Bhagwan Dev Atma and which are as under :—

- (1) True and unshakable faith in the highest psychic or divine life or *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

(2) True and unfaltering reverence for the *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

(3) True and unshakable feeling of gratitude for the invaluable spiritual benefits received from Bhagwan Dev Atma.

(4) Love for the unique influences of Bhagwan's highest psychic forces or divine influences (*Dev Prabhavas*).

If these four higher feelings do not germinate at all in any fit human soul, he cannot establish any soul communion or spiritual relation with the highest soul-life or *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

A brief explanation of these higher feelings is given below :—

I—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE FAITH IN THE HIGHEST DIVINE LIFE OR “DEV RUP” OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA.

When any fit soul, having received the highest psychic light or *Dev Joti* of Bhagwan, *on the one hand*, realises the truth that all or any form of attachment for falsehoods and wrong acts degenerates his soul and vitiates his constructive power and that by following the course of truth and goodness alone, he can develop the constructive power of his soul and elevate his life; and, *on the other*, he deepens the consciousness that highest psychic forces of the all-sided love of truth and goodness which have evolved in Bhagwan and the true highest divine life which these forces have evolved in him, *are facts*, and that this highest divine life of Bhagwan (or his *Dev Rup*) admits or can admit of no doubt whatsoever, he develops the true higher feeling of faith in Bhagwan Dev Atma as being the only true worshipful being.

Before this wonderful faith, based on facts, can develop in any soul respecting the *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma, it is essential that he must, in the unique light of Bhagwan, realise and develop faith in some preliminary truths about the great reality of Nature, in the course of the evolutionary process of which Bhagwan's unique manifestation has appeared.

If a soul does not *possess any capacity* to receive the light of Bhagwan and cannot realize even these preliminary truths, he can never develop true and unshakable faith in Bhagwan Dev Atma's *Dev Rup*.

—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE FEELING OF REVERENCE IN RELATION TO “DEV RUP” OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA.

When on receiving the unique divine light of Bhagwan Dev Atma a fit person realises, to some extent, the beauty of his *Dev Rup* and of the highest divine heart-forces which constitute it, and also realises that he (that person) himself is not only utterly devoid of them but is ruled by various happiness based low-loves and their resultant low-hates which have created various soul-maladies in him, and further realises that in Bhagwan's *Dev Rup* lies all the environmental conditions necessary to give him freedom from his

soul-diseases as well as to evolve higher life in him, he becomes conscious of his own insignificance and of the true grandeur of Bhagwan Dev Atma's *Dev Rup*. In this attitude of mind he finds true shelter and safety of his soul at the feet of Dev Atma. He thus becomes truly humble and feels a yearning to sing praises of the beauty and grandeur of this *Dev Rup* and feels happy to hear any other person also singing such praises. Such an attitude of heart is called higher reverence (*Shradha*).

III—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE FEELING OF GRATITUDE TOWARDS THE "DEV RUP" OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA.

The true feeling of gratitude in its unshakable form towards Bhagwan Dev Atma is said to exist in a fit soul, when he feels himself *truly indebted to Bhagwan for the favours received* in the shape of his having been liberated from various false beliefs respecting soul and *Dharma*, from several sins and false and evil rites or practices, etc.; in having received true light of true *Dharma* or in having received any bodily gain or good of his family members; and urged by the consciousness of such indebtedness, he feels *a longing to make some return* in the shape of services and *actually serves* Bhagwan in one or other manner or *fulfils any of his wishes* in relation to those persons, animals, plants, houses, etc., that are dependent on or are related to him, and is ever ready to do such service even when Bhagwan has left this earth, and *in doing that service he willingly makes a sacrifice* of his bodily and mental powers, his wealth and other possessions, etc.

IV—LOVE FOR BHAGWAN DEV ATMA'S "DEV PRABHAVAS"

A fit soul is said to possess true love for the *Dev Prabhavas* (highest psychic or divine influences emanating from Bhagwan's *Dev Rup*) of Bhagwan Dev Atma, when he realises in Bhagwan's unique light the great truth that he cannot get freedom from the various soul-diseases generated in his soul by the operation of his own inherent and developed low-loves, the degeneration of his soul-life and the loss of the constructive soul-power which such soul-diseases lead to, *save and except by the alchemy of the Dev Prabhavas of Bhagwan Dev Atma*; he further realises that it is again by means of these unique *Dev Prabhavas* that he has been able to develop, to some extent, the higher powers which unite his soul with Bhagwan's *Dev Rup* and that, only by means of these *Dev Prabhavas*, he will be able to evolve other higher forces, which have as yet not manifested in him, and with all such realisation he feels an urge within to assimilate these *Dev Prabhavas*.

So long as this realisation of the saving and evolving power of Dev Prabhavas and the longing to assimilate them are absent in any person, he will not be able to establish soul-communion with Bhagwan, and thus will fail to truly worship him, even in spite of the fact, that he may have developed in his soul, to some extent, true and unshakable faith, reverence and gratitude towards Bhagwan.

Again a fit person can develop this love only to the extent he gets freedom from one or other of his low-loves as this blessed love cannot evolve in a heart which possesses no repulsion for any of his low-loves or degenerating beliefs, thoughts, or actions.

THE WAYS AND MEANS TO DEVELOP THE FOREGOING HIGHER FEELINGS.

So long as a man does not possess true desire or yearning to evolve these altruistic blessed feelings, he cannot accept any course of religious exercises which is calculated to develop them. This desire or yearning can grow in a man only when he realises the truth that (a) the *unique light* which removes soul-darkness and imparts true soul-knowledge and (b) the *unique power* which gives one true freedom from the degenerating courses of soul, and evolves higher and altruistic feelings, are totally wanting in him and that they emanate only from Bhagwan Dev Atma's *Dev Rup*; hence Bhagwan's relation is the most important and essential one for the welfare and evolution of his soul. When this true yearning arises to a sufficient degree in a fit person, then and then alone, he not only undertakes and tries to perform regularly, the various religious exercises, which are necessary to develop these higher feelings in order to establish and deepen his spiritual relation with Bhagwan Dev Atma, but *feels true satisfaction and happiness in performing such exercises and experiences pain and distress when he fails to perform them.*

I—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE FAITH.

When the true desire or longing for the development of this faith has evolved in a fit person, he should retire to some retired place, and, by himself or in company of other kindred souls, try to realise the very sublime and most precious facts regarding the *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma by the following exercises :—

1. The reading of, and contemplation on the wonderful story of the evolution, from their germ state, of those unique forces of complete love of truth and goodness which gave Bhagwan his *Dev Rup* and developed in him the highest divine life or *Dev Jiwan*; and thereby realising, firstly the beauty of the various forces of love for goodness which when fully developed, under favourable conditions, established his higher harmonious relation with all kingdoms of nature and made him a complete lover of goodness; secondly the beauty of those highest consciousnesses which developed in him, true knowledge of and repulsion for those thoughts and deeds which are antagonistic to goodness; thirdly the beauty of those science-grounded right conclusions or truths which he discovered relating to the most horrible state of disharmony in relations which exists in this world, and the need and ways of removing that, and of establishing higher harmony; fourthly the beauty of his wonderful love for truth and truth alone, which, after the unfoldment from its germ state, gradually and steadily developed in him in favourable conditions

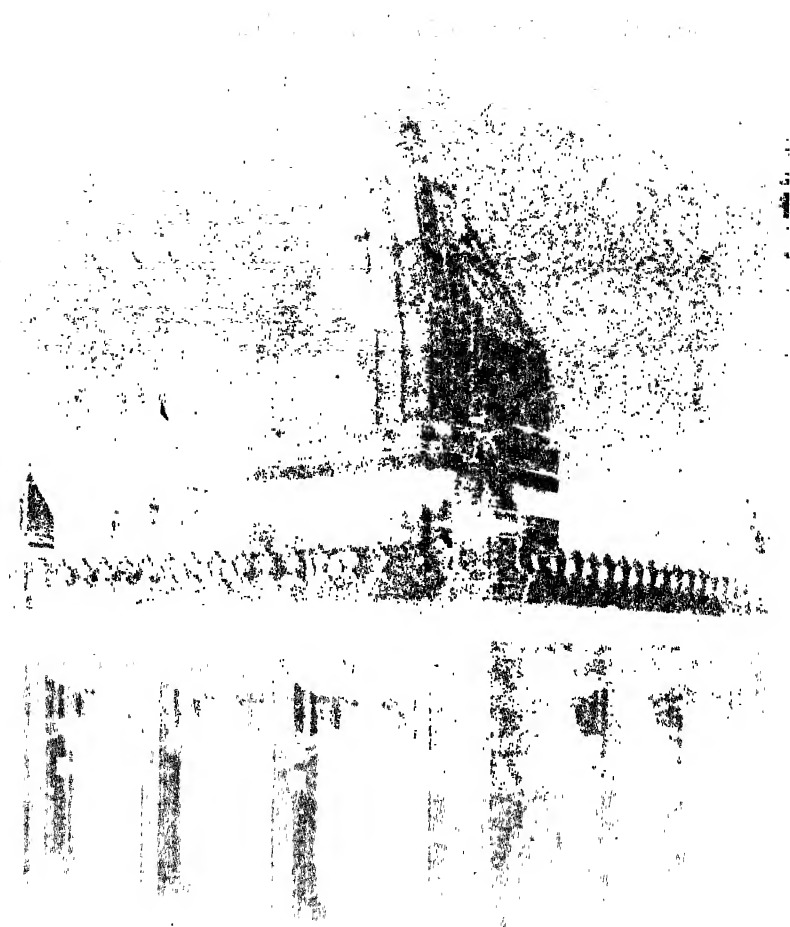
and which revealed to him the harmfulness of all the fiction-grounded and false faiths of the world, and led him to discover and impart teachings of one true universal system of religion.

2. The reading of and contemplation on various writings on the supreme ideal of Bhagwan Dev Atma. When the unfoldment of his unique forces had progressed to the extent that these unique forces alone became the ruling and sovereign forces of his life, it became inevitable for him to take up the unique mission of waging a relentless war against the antagonistic forces of untruth and wrong or evil, and rescue souls from their grip, in order to establish the reign of truth and goodness, and to surrender all his powers to this supreme mission of his life. No founder of any faith and leader of any movement, or any other person, had embraced such a unique mission, as, the unique psychic forces, which could make it possible, were absent in them. Along with the realisation of the beauty and glory of this supreme mission, the glory of his unique surrenders and sacrifices for its fulfilment, should also be realised, *i.e.* (1) the true renunciation of all such persons, whether connected with him by family ties or bonds of community, creed or society, as proved an impediment in the fulfilment of his above supreme mission; (2) the suffering of all such heart-breaking persecutions by his opponents, and heart-shocks from his own people, due to their vanity, want of the sense of duty, self-will, want of due respect, selfishness, jealousy, etc.; and bearing the sting of the poisoned arrows of ingratitude from those indebted souls who, on becoming unfaithful, deserted his cause, betrayed him, and tried their utmost to harm both; (3) the true sacrifice of his happiness and peace of mind, etc., in order to bring about victory of truth and goodness; (4) the surrender of all his physical and mental powers, his property and possessions, etc., in order to promote his unique mission.

3. Contemplation on the manifestation and evolution of unique *Dev Joti* in Bhagwan Dev Atma. The evolution of the highest soul-forces or *Dev Shakties* in the soul of Bhagwan, produced in him a unique light which revealed to him the hitherto undiscovered world of wonderful truths regarding the nature and organism of soul, its evolutionary and dissolutionary courses, its diseases, the way to cure these diseases, the evolution of higher life, etc. These truths could not have been discovered by any other light, as *Dev Joti* is the only light which reveals the world of soul.

4. Contemplation on the manifestation and evolution of unique *Dev Tej* in Bhagwan Dev Atma. The unique divine power or *Dev Tej* which has evolved in Bhagwan Dev Atma owing to his *Dev Shakties*, is also an unprecedented phenomenon in the world. This *Dev Tej* constitutes the following four *Dev Bhavas* or highest divine feelings:—

(a) *Highest Psychic or Divine repulsion or Dev Ghirna* is the name of the group of those feelings of overpowering repulsion for all that stands for untruth and wrong, which, in the gradual evolution of the various forces of love of truth and goodness, evolved in



‘THE SMADHI’ AT LAHORE
Built in 1932

Bhagwan. This *Dev Ghirna* led to hatred for all kinds of falsehoods and all kinds of evils, vices or wrong acts prevalent in mankind. This *Dev Ghirna* did not let any low-loves of pleasure grow in Bhagwan's soul which are the root cause of falsehoods and evils, nor did it allow Bhagwan to love any person or thing on the basis of happiness and to develop any undue bias for such happiness-motivated objects.

(b) *Highest pain or Dev dukh*.—The *Dukh* or pain which Bhagwan Dev Atma developed in relation to the most pitiable state of all ties or bonds which humanity has formed on the basis of injustice and, *Adharm* (or low life) and owing to which, it has produced intense misery and suffering for man, animal and even led to wanton destruction of sub-animal worlds, is called *Dev Dukh*.

(c) *Highest antagonism or Dev Shatruta*.—The feeling of antagonism which Bhagwan Dev Atma developed, with the evolution of *Dev Dukh*, for all low-loves and low-hates and all falsehoods and all evils which are due to them, is called *Dev Shatruta*.

(d) *Highest faith or Vishwas*.—The feeling of highest faith, which Bhagwan Dev Atma developed in the ultimate triumph of truth over untruth and of goodness over evil, in the warfare which he, led by his *Dev Shatruta*, waged with the forces of untruth and evil, and in which he went on acquiring victories after victories over them with the help of the higher powers in Nature, is called *Dev Vishwas*.

This unique *Dev Tej* of Bhagwan Dev Atma is the cause of producing marvellous higher changes in the lives of fit souls who had or have the privilege of receiving it.

II—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE REVERENCE.

Any *Sadhak* who strongly possesses the yearning for developing this higher feeling should adopt the following means to develop it :—

He should read and contemplate over all literature connected with those four most precious truths regarding the *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma which have been described above, and thus deepen his reverence for Bhagwan's *Dev Rup*. He should develop the feeling of true humility by realising the glory of his *Dev Rup* and the insignificance of his own soul, and in this state of heart, he should offer his true homage to him and thus develop the feeling of higher and true admiration for him. He should also develop, by repeated *Sadhans*, true respect for all such persons or things which are connected with Bhagwan and specially his writings. He should go on pilgrimage to his birth-place or such other places which may be associated with Bhagwan's life or where monuments are raised in his memory, such as his *Samadhi*, etc. He should sing his glory by reciting hymns, *astotar*, *arti*, etc., read the incidents of his unique life with deep devotion and fervour or join congregations where such *Sadhans* are done, and thus realise more and more the true bliss arising out of them. He should also read life-sketches of Bhagwan's parents and ancestors and contemplate over their great virtues.

He should develop true respect and reverence for all such souls who possess higher reverence for Bhagwan or who, besides that, have developed feeling of gratitude for him and are devoted to the service of his mission. Besides this, he should avoid, in the first place, the society of all such persons who possess feelings of low-hatred and a perverted vision for Bhagwan, and should abandon all liking for any scurrilous literature written against Bhagwan and his cause; and in the second place, should feel shocked when any low or misguided person indulges in calumny against Bhagwan in press or platform or in conversation, and should stand up boldly against all such base things and expose them. This *Sadhan* also develops feeling of reverence.

III—THE TRUE AND UNSHAKABLE GRATITUDE.

When any indebted person who was enveloped in utter soul-darkness and was ruled by low-loves and low-hates has seen in the light of Bhagwan, according to his capacity, the harmfulness of his soul-darkness, false beliefs and evil practices, and has developed, by means of Bhagwan's *Dev Tej*, higher repulsion and pain for them, and has thus not only got true liberty from several of his false faiths and evil thoughts and acts, but has been enabled to make amends for one or other of his past wrongs, and thus got rid of their impurities, and, who has been able to see the beauty of higher forces, has developed one or other of them, feels indebted to Bhagwan Dev Atma for all these higher boons of soul and finds joy in discharging this very precious debt, as far as possible, by disinterested service in relation to Bhagwan, and finds pain if he grows negligent in this respect; he is said to have awakened in his soul feeling of true gratitude towards Bhagwan.

The sacrifices or surrenders by which a person, who has awakened in himself this blessed feeling, can develop it more and more are as under :—

The dedication of his (1) money, (2) property, (3) powers of learning, thought, skill, writing, etc., and (4) bodily powers, out of the purest motives of doing disinterested service with a view to lighten, to some extent, the burden of his indebtedness.

Such sacrifices can be made by grateful persons in relation to Bhagwan even after he has left this earth, by dedicating moneys and properties to "Bhagwan Bhaint Fund" or by preserving memorials raised to Bhagwan, or by fulfilling the expressed wishes of Bhagwan, in any respect.

IV—TRUE LOVE FOR THE "DEV PRABHAVAS" OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA.

The rays of unique light and unique power emitted by the ideal psychic or divine life of Bhagwan are called *Dev Prabhavas* (or highest psychic or divine influences).

A person who is able to receive the unique rays of Bhagwan's *Dev Prabhavas* and who has not grown so hard-hearted as to

become impervious to them, is called a fit soul. A soul becomes hard-hearted and is gradually rendered impervious to Bhagwan's unique *Dev Prabhavas* by (1) sovereign sway of low-loves, (2) growth of low-hates, specially hatred for Bhagwan Dev Atma, the fountain head of *Dev Prabhavas*, (3) continuous indulgence in evil conduct in relation to various existences of Nature, (4) continued disregard of the light of Bhagwan Dev Atma by refusing to walk the way shown by it.

To degenerate to such a soul-state is indeed most deplorable for a man and it means his greatest and irreparable loss. Besides being free from such a woeful soul-state a fit soul should also possess objective favourable conditions, if he wants to receive *Dev Prabhavas*. These external conditions are, (1) pure and clean state of body, (2) pure and clean state of clothes, (3) pure and clean state of the place where the religious exercises are performed, and (4) freedom from all such causes as lead to the distraction of mind.

Besides this, even a fit soul could be desirous of getting the *Dev Prabhavs* only when, (1) he has awakened in himself a consciousness of the degenerating nature of any of his low-loves, and (2) has realized the truth that by the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma alone, he could get true freedom from that degenerating low-love, and develop one or other higher feeling necessary to promote the constructive power of his soul.

This two-fold consciousness can lead to the development, in a fit soul, of true attraction for the *Dev Prabhavs*, so much so, that he would begin to value them above everything in the world and would feel happy and blessed only when he receives them, and miserable when he does not get them.

A fit soul, who possesses this two-fold consciousness and is earnest about getting *Dev Prabhavas* to liberate himself from any low-love, must sit in an undisturbed state of mind in a secluded place which is free from all distractions and there endeavour to bring before himself the mental picture of Bhagwan. He should then pray unto Bhagwan to bless him with his *Dev Prabhavas* so that he may see his inner self in true colours, and realise that low-love of his to be truly harmful, and imbibe in himself true repulsion and pain for it. In this prayerful attitude, he should sing such hymns and read such literature, as can help him in this. Thus on getting the *Dev Prabhavas* when he feels an urge to make amends for any harm done by him to Bhagwan Dev Atma or any other person, he should write a letter of apology to the injured person or verbally apologise to him. He should feel blessed for this unique gift of *Dev Prabhavas* and be grateful to Bhagwan for it.

The Sadhan of true reparation is one true method for purifying one's soul. If the harmed person is living, one should make amends to him personally. If he is dead, he should deepen his sense of pain and apologise to the departed by bringing him before his mind's eye, and serve his children or family connections. If he has

harmed animals or plants, he must serve their species. This drama enacted by the magic of Bhagwan's *Dev Prabhvas* can be seen in the lives of hundreds of souls who have imbibed them and in almost every session of the Dev Samaj Higher Life Training Academy now at Moga.

As these *Dev Prabhvas* are calculated to remove soul-darkness and produce purity of life, so they are also able to impart the light of true knowledge about soul and true *Dharma* to any person who is desirous of getting that knowledge. *It is the unique light of Bhagwan which alone can give this direct knowledge to a fit soul.* This direct knowledge once received has to be deepened by repeatedly seeing each truth in the light of Bhagwan, by contemplation over all such facts as illustrate that truth and reading all such literature as throws light on it.

But let this be remembered that all this most valuable knowledge is bound to be lost on a man who is utterly selfish and who uses it for his own aggrandizement. He alone can progress in any such true knowledge who imparts it to others by pen or tongue, and endeavours to remove fiction and untruth.

These *Dev Prabhvas* also develop in a fit and earnest soul one or other higher powers. Man, as he is constituted, moves by considerations of happiness and pain only. Hence if he does not find happiness in the exercise of any higher feeling, he will not try to develop it. But if a person finds joy in the exercise of his feeling of reverence or faith in Bhagwan and is anxious to develop that feeling, he is bound to adopt ways and means necessary for its development. Similar is the case for the development of other higher or altruistic powers.

However a man can or would feel no necessity or longing for receiving the *Dev Prabhvas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma if and when

- (1) knowing any of his false belief, false thought, false statement, false promise or any of his other false action to be false, he feels no repulsion and pain for it, nay on the contrary he feels at home with that woeful state ;
- (2) knowing any of his harmful or wrong action in relation to any man, animal, plant or inanimate existence to be sinful or wrong, he feels no repulsion and pain for it, but on the contrary feels joy in doing it ;
- (3) he feels no repulsion or pain for being and remaining in darkness or ignorance about his own being or his real self or soul and on the contrary lives well contented with such a woeful soul-state ;
- (4) he possesses no consciousness about his soul-degeneration and feels no repulsion or pain for his low-loves or low-hates which he knows, are producing in him the degeneration of his soul-life, and also possesses no consciousness about the constructive power of his soul, nor feels any

attraction for any higher feeling which is calculated to promote such constructive power, but remains contented in the state of his daily weakening soul-power.

There can be no greater calamity for a living rational being than the above unfit state of soul.

THE CAUSES WHICH DEPRIVE A MAN FOR RECEIVING
THE "DEV PRABHAVS" OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA
EVEN AFTER TAKING HIS REFUGE.

Besides his other low-loves, slavery to which makes even a follower of Bhagwan Dev Atma indifferent towards establishing his soul-relation with Bhagwan, his various low feelings, produced by the low-love of self or ego, specially stand in his way in this respect, and degenerate his soul to such an extent that he becomes totally incapacitated from receiving Bhagwan's *Dev Prabhavs*. These degrading low feelings are as under :—

1. *Slavery to love of selfishness*.—This disables a man from establishing any kind of higher relation with Bhagwan Dev Atma even after receiving various invaluable favours at his hands, or from cherishing any desire for serving his supreme mission in one form or another, or from having any liking for realising the grandeur of Bhagwan's *Dev Rup*, his *Dev Prabhavs*, his true religious teachings, his supreme ideal, for recounting his unique favours on him, his family and other relations, or from viewing such course of life, in Bhagwan Dev Atma's relation as harmful.

2. *Slavery to love of vanity or self-aggrandizement*.—The one ruling *mantra* of a man dominated by vanity is that he should not be believed, declared or considered to be inferior, even though he may in fact be inferior. Thus he is disabled from seeing even his sinful and wicked deeds or the absence of any virtue in him. On the contrary such a diseased soul tries to manufacture lies to hide his defects and evil acts. Being himself quite incapable of seeing the true nature of his soul, its enslavement to low-loves and low-hates, and the glory of the highest divine forces of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and, being quite destitute of any consciousness for any sin or any higher feeling, he falsely poses as superior in knowledge even to Bhagwan. On holding any difference of opinion with Bhagwan on any subject, he trumpets his own glory before others and thus tries to create irreverence for Bhagwan. Such an unfortunate soul considers the higher souls in Dev Samaj as inferior to himself, although his own life is much inferior to theirs.

3. *Slavery to love of self-will*.—A slave to this low force feels pain at Bhagwan's telling him anything against any of his low-loves, however degenerating or harmful they may be, and *prefers to guide his life by his own will*. While working in organisation, he dislikes to go by the will of his superiors and follows the bent of his own mind, however harmful it may be to others. Such a soul while working in an institution ; and therefore bound to obey the right orders of his superiors or the rules of the institution, violates such

regulations and rules and thus proves harmful. Such a soul even when enrolled as a worker under the banner of Bhagwan, does not accommodate himself to suit the right policy of the society, as that militates against his happiness and thus breaks the salutary principles of discipline and proves harmful.

4. *Slavery to love of low-hatred.*—Low-love-bound soul feels hatred for any man, animal or other existence whom he considers an obstacle in the gratification of that love of his. Such hatred is called low-hate. This leads man to falsehoods and unjust acts. Led by this low-hate, man *wishes evil* to the objects of his hate, gets *perverted vision* in their relation, *develops vindictiveness* and feeling of revenge against them, and musters up *courage to persecute* even his benefactors and thus find happiness.

Those who cannot get liberty from the hellish control of these four most dangerous soul-diseases, are bound to be deprived of the privilege of getting *Dev Prabhas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma

AN ILLUSION REGARDING MAN'S FREEDOM OF WILL.

Theists allege that some God, *Ishwara* or *Paramatma*, etc., has created or made man, and that he has endowed him with such a capacity that if he wishes, he can free himself completely from any thought or act which is revealed by such a God to be a sin. This belief of theirs is totally false and against every day facts. In the first place, no such being as God or *Ishwara* at all exists in self-existent and eternal Nature. When such a being does not exist, it is idle to believe that he has given any free will to man. Again every day life of any man is a positive illustration of the fact that once he is completely enslaved to any low-love or low-hate, he is not able to shake off its bondage even though such a slavery leads him to acts, harmful to his own interests as well as to those of others.

All thoughts and deeds of man are the outcome of his inner feelings. When a man does not possess a certain feeling, he cannot think any thought or do any act which can be the result of that feeling alone. A child possessed of no sexual feeling is unable to think and act sexually in relation to any person. But even when a man possesses any feeling, he cannot gratify it, if any stronger feeling or outward conditions stand in its way or destroy its influence. Thus a man who is laid up in bed and has lost his physical strength to the extent that he is not able to move even from his bed, *cannot*, even if he wishes, get up from his bed and walk miles in fresh fragrant air. A man caught up by the swift current of rushing waters of a river and not being able to resist its onslaught, is swept off and drowned by it, even though he wishes to come out of it and does not desire to die.

Similarly, even when a man considers any particular course of his life as sinful, and does not like the harm which it causes to himself or others, he cannot *by mere wish*, come out of its grip when once he has become a slave to that course of life. Strong habits are

called tyrants. Low-loves when once developed fully in a man, become the absolute masters of his will. Such a slave cannot by himself shake off the control of any of them, and even when he possesses sufficient desire to get free from them, he can do so only by the help of another soul who is already liberated from that low-love.

There are millions, however, who do not even wish to get freedom from the bondage of their low-loves and low-hates, but, on the contrary, ever remain desirous for gratifying them. This is why men are addicted to intoxicating drinks, sexual excesses including adultery, cheating, theft, bribes-taking and other unjust deeds. Led by a wish to please their society or community and to get praise from them, they continue to follow evil customs which they know to be harmful, keep false religious symbols which they know to be useless; and thus grow hypocrites. They resent all attempts made even by their dearest ones to liberate them from the grip of such evils.

Can such hopeless slaves be called free or independent? The question may be asked that if a man has become a slave in the hands of any of his low-loves and is driven even against his wishes to wrong actions, why should he be punished for his crimes against society? He is punished because the victims of his criminal tendencies and criminal acts are to be protected; because human nature does not wish any harm to be done to it by others and struggles to defend itself against their transgression. This is why society has formulated laws penalising such acts and punishing the criminals. This function is performed in civilised races by governments which, besides protecting society against crimes, promote the good of individuals as well.

In the end, let it be borne in mind that as man is led to all his thoughts and deeds by his inner feelings, he cannot be called free, but is an agent in their hands.

CONCLUSIONS.

I. ANY HIGHER CHANGE POSSIBLE IN FIT SOULS CAN BE BROUGHT ONLY ON THE BASIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS OF PLEASURE AND PAIN AND NOT OTHERWISE.

Man is by nature happiness-loving. He possesses deep love for one or other kind of happiness. He possesses repulsion for pain, and chooses to pass through pain or suffering only to the extent, that it is impossible for him to otherwise obtain one or other pleasures he desires ardently. *Such being the very nature or texture of his soul, it has become impossible for him to go against it.* If a man develops love for happiness derivable from the gratification of physical senses, it is imperative for him to become intemperate. If he develops love for family, children, fame, name, power, position, wealth, possessions, etc., he is bound to have recourse to such ways and means, as are opposed to truth and goodness and, thus besides degenerating his soul, he suffers bodily and mental pains, resulting in many cases even in shortening the span of his life.

Now if any higher change is to be wrought in the soul of a fit person, it is necessary that he must develop repulsion and pain, for his false and unjust thoughts and acts, so that he may get free from them. Moreover when he gets free, he should find and feel joy in that state of freedom. In the same way, if a person has to retain any higher feeling which he has evolved in his soul, he should find joy in the exercises of that higher feeling. It is then and then alone that he would continue to do some noble and selfless acts for the welfare of others.

The manifestation of Bhagwan Dev Atma is intended to bring about in this world higher changes in conformity with this universal law of Nature.

2. MANIFESTATION OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA FOR HERALDING A NEW AGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF MAN.

As already stated, before the advent of Bhagwan Dev Atma, the entire world was hopelessly enveloped in soul-darkness. No one possessed true knowledge relating to the nature and organism of soul, its diseases, its degeneration, its annihilation, its true freedom from those diseases and the degeneration due to them, its true evolution, the true method and need of its evolution, etc., as all of them were devoid of that unique light which has evolved in Bhagwan and which alone reveals and can reveal true knowledge about all these subjects. This true knowledge is the only true knowledge respecting true religion. In absence of this true knowledge humanity remained sunk in the whirlpools of false and most harmful beliefs and exercises in the name of religion.

Besides this dead weight of false beliefs pressing on man which his low-loves-bound ture created for him, the gradual development of these low-loves themselves also cast upon him a sort of fascination for falsehood which he abundantly and literally used in order to earn and amass wealth, develop possessions, conceal his sins, crimes and vices from public exposure, defend his truly guilty relations from the grip of law, get false praise or realise several other low objects or low ideals of his life.

All persons of the world are ruled by consciousness of pleasure and pain alone, and being lovers of pleasure and haters of pain, they naturally form and accept happiness as the only ideal of life, when, according to the law of life, the evolution of true higher life is man's one true ideal and not the attainment of any kind of happiness.

Thus the entire world was groping in the abyss of soul-darkness and soul-ignorance and millions of persons were clapped behind the prison bars of the false faiths; and, being dominated by low-loves and low-hates, they were inflicting various kinds of injustices, wrongs and sufferings on human and sub-human worlds; and thus were sinking more and more into the quagmire of soul-degeneration. They cried and groaned due to sufferings caused by this woeful state,

but by themselves they possessed no power to cast off the bondage of their low-loves and low-hates. They possessed no consciousness of higher ideal of life and hence cherished no desire to evolve that in their soul.

In order to bring about higher change in such a deplorable state of man, to rescue him from the snares of false faiths and ignorance and darkness about soul, to liberate him from his most harmful and most degenerating soul-life and to herald a new higher and golden age of true soul-knowledge and altruistic life, some manifestation, possessed of the unique highest psychic or divine forces, was needed. Such a manifestation is that of Bhagwan Dev Atma who has heralded the new golden and most blessed age, which the true further evolution of man sorely demanded and which has sounded the death-knell of all false faiths and the most hideous sway of low-loves and low-hates. He has ushered in a new era of true science-grounded and Nature-based knowledge about soul and of all higher powers of soul which enable man to establish his relation with all existences not on the basis of low-loves and low-hates but on the basis of higher loves and higher hates, and thus make him less and less harmful and more and more useful to them.

3. THE HIGHEST CHANGES IN STORE FOR HUMAN AND SUB-HUMAN KINGDOMS BY THE UNIQUE INFLUENCES OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA.

The above new era of highest changes in the human world which has been ushered by the unique highest influences or *Dev Prabhavs* of Bhagwan Dev Atma, as witnessed in the lives of thousands of persons of all ages and stages, could only be brought about by these unique highest influences or *Dev Prabhavs*. In future too, all those higher changes towards the further righteous evolution of man which are possible only by the *Dev Prabhavs* of Bhagwan Dev Atma would be brought about by these self-same *Dev Prabhavs*. These future highest changes would be on these lines :—

1. As the rays of the light and power of Bhagwan's *Dev Shakties* have illumined at present the souls of hundreds of fit persons and enabled them to see truths about the organised nature and life of soul and the one true religion and as these light and power charged *Dev Prabhavs* have enabled hundreds to get freedom from various kinds of false beliefs, which blessed change they could not have got otherwise; so in future too fit souls would undergo similar higher change by the self-same rays of the light and power of Bhagwan Dev Atma alone.

2. In the present the true liberty which fit souls have got from such of their unjust and evil deeds, which they were enabled to see in Bhagwan's *Dev Joti* to be most harmful and most repulsive and painful by means of Bhagwan's *Dev Tej*, has been mainly and solely possible through the *Dev Prabhavs* of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and owing to which they have actually been saved from inflicting undue pain and harm on other existences which were their victims

before. In future too, such most blessed higher change would fall to the lot of fit souls by the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma alone.

Besides giving this true freedom, the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma have further developed, by now, in fit souls that true pain for their past sins and impurities which has prompted them to make due reparation for those sins by returning either to the owners the money or other things which they had improperly got before their true conversion, or, in case of not being able to trace the owners, to hand them over to some charitable cause. This marvellous work would continue in future too only by the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma and by no other agency.

3. The evolution of any higher consciousness or feeling, in relation to the existences of any kingdom of Nature, which has taken place in fit souls by means of Bhagwan's light and power, and which has made them really serviceable to those existences and thus strengthened their constructive power to some extent, has been due only to the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma. In future too, this most blessed change would take place in the lives of fit souls by the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma alone and by no other agency.

4. The highest psychic forces of Bhagwan have developed those highest consciousnesses in him in all cosmic relations which are found nowhere and which have enabled him to impart teachings, on what a man ought to do and what he should refrain from, in all those relations. These teachings are altogether new to this world. These are all embodied in the form of commandments in the *Dev Shashtra*. Reading and contemplation over these in the light of Bhagwan Dev Atma enables a fit soul to realise, according to his capacity, his weaknesses and defects which had been a sealed book to him before, and to get freedom from them on receiving the *Dev Tej* of Bhagwan.

This true knowledge and true desire to get free from such weaknesses and shortcomings of one's soul-life in all human and sub-human relations has been possible only by means of the *Dev Prabhavas* of Bhagwan Dev Atma and by no other agency. In future too such wonderful work of higher changes would take place in fit souls only by the alchemy of Bhagwan Dev Atma's *Dev Prabhavas*.

This most blessed higher change in man leads to the higher good of even sub-human kingdoms. For when a man sees the harmfulness of his evil and unjust thoughts and acts in relation to these kingdoms or develops higher consciousness in their relation, he not only refrains from doing harm to them but tries his best to serve them and prove useful for them in various ways. This brings about higher changes in the sub-human worlds as well. Thus the unique manifestation of Bhagwan Dev Atma is calculated to bring about highest good of all the four kingdoms. Hence it is to the highest benefit of all fit human souls to have the privilege of getting the refuge of Bhagwan.

PART VIII

**UNIQUE LIFE OF BHAGWAN DEV ATMA AS
LIVED IN VARIOUS RELATIONS.**

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA AS A SON.

The various forces of the love of goodness that bloomed and blossomed in the unique soul of Bhagwan Dev Atma even in his childhood period sought their full gratification. When these forces could find no scope for their exercise or met with any obstruction, Bhagwan Dev Atma became restless and suffered severe heart shocks. He refused to flee from these painful experiences, but at the same time it was also not possible for him to go against the above mentioned dominant and superb forces of good or to co-operate with their antagonistic forces of evil, simply to avoid misery or to gain any kind of happiness. With the Dev Atma, even as a child, *happiness lay in goodness*. He did not feel that happiness was in all cases synonymous with goodness. In his *Autobiography*, Vol. II, Bhagwan says :—

“I was extremely desirous of living in a state of harmony with every relation and every man, but I could do so only on the basis of my higher forces. However, as others could not establish the higher harmonious relation with me on the basis of my higher forces—as they were not only devoid of these psychic powers but were dominated by their antagonistic forces—so also it was not possible for me to establish union with them on the basis of low forces.”

This led to a conflict. But is it not marvellous that amidst all the horrible din, heat and confusion which the clash of opposite and antagonistic forces gave rise to, Bhagwan maintained an unbroken record of higher relation based on goodness with the various human and subhuman kingdoms?

DEEPEST REVERENCE FOR PARENTS.

From his very childhood, Bhagwan Dev Atma entertained a feeling of *unalloyed and deep respect for elders, reverence for their virtues, and gratitude for the services or benefits* that he received at their hands. Hence as a son, he offered respectful obeisance to his parents in the morning by touching their feet. When he grew up he would wash a toe of the foot of his worthy father and take a sip from that water just to appease and satisfy his deep feeling of reverence for him according to Hindu traditions. His reverence for his noble mother was simply superb. She lived long enough to see her unique son grow into Dev Atma. But though Bhagwan became the worshipful being for hundreds of his followers and object of veneration for thousands, he could not forget what he owed to his mother. His wondrous forces of reverence so tenderly worked him up, that once, at the sight of his mother, he was so deeply moved that he spontaneously prostrated himself on bare

dusty ground before her, in sweet humility and touched her sacred feet with his blessed head. The "mother" (a word carrying most sacred associations) was all that he saw then and nothing else. What a grand manifestation of filial reverence !

This feeling of genuine respect and deep reverence for his parents was of that glorious type that it could not brook any idea of ridiculing them, talking ill of them or treating them slightly even behind their back, even when he differed from them. On many an occasion, there was a clash of ideas. Though Bhagwan Dev Atma followed the wake of his growing light, he never forgot even for a moment, that they were the authors of his being and his first great benefactors. As he respected them in their presence, so did he remember them with deep respect even in their absence. This trait is uncommon and rare. Millions of children would make a monkey-show of respect in the presence of their parents, owing to fear or convention ; but as soon as their back is turned they would indulge in ridiculous imitation of their one or other weakness, find unholy joy in sickening laughter at their cost and thus debase their soul-life.

PERSONAL AND MONETARY SERVICE.

As a grateful child Bhagwan could not bear the idea of maintaining callous indifference to them. In obedience to this feeling of indebtedness, he would help his mother in domestic work, shampoo his father's feet and legs, and help to look after his younger baby brother, when his mother was busy with her household duties, thus making his life a boon to parents.

It was also a natural consequence of his deepest feeling of gratitude to be of as little burden on them as he possibly could. During his two years of training in the Roorkee College, he worked hard and won scholarships. He tried to confine his expenses within the stipends he was able to win. The total amount that he sent for, from his father, in the whole course of these two years, did not exceed rupees fifty. When he entered service, he gladly sent to his parents every pie, that he could save. He felt it as an imperative and sacred obligation on him as a son. In one of his letters, addressed to his revered father, on the 24th April, 1872, he wrote :—

"Up to now, I have been sending you all the money that I could spare for your use or for the use of the other members of the family. I have been keeping for myself only just as little as would meet my requirements."

Again in his letter dated the 19th July, 1873, he wrote :—

"It is not in accordance with my inner nature to allow any kind of undue pain to be caused to you as far as I can help it..... *I do fully realise the favours and services I have received at your hands.*"

On the 13th December, 1875, Bhagwan Dev Atma addressed a letter to his revered mother in which he said :—

"It gives me great peace of mind to know that you are in every way pleased and satisfied with me. I am anxious to earn more and more of your satisfaction. *Kindly consider me ever your dutiful and serviceable child.* Do not ever hesitate to open your heart to me and call upon me for anything you actually require. I would try as far as it lies in my power to meet all your proper wishes."

This shows how willing and always ready Bhagwan Dev Atma was to prove as serviceable to his parents as possible. It was impossible for such a child to cast selfish and greedy eye upon the property owned by them. In fact, Bhagwan Dev Atma took nothing from his patrimony. He left all that his father owned to his widowed mother as the sole mistress. He thought it his holy duty to contribute his own quota from his own earnings for her comfort. Bhagwan Dev Atma felt that the debt he owed to his parents for their having brought him up and educated him and thus enabling him to stand on his own legs was too great to be fully discharged. Hence when he was in service and his revered father out of paternal love offered him a shawl (which he himself did not use) Bhagwan very humbly declined to accept it on the honest plea that he felt himself already too much overwhelmed with the debt of services he had received from him and hence was unable to incur further debt. In fact parents' debt on children is huge enough. But those bereft of the feeling of gratitude and swamped by the hateful force of selfishness, claim every pie that their father earns or mother collects, and get furious when these authors of their being dare to utilise any part of their own collections in helping any good cause. It is this absence of gratitude and the abnormal growth of selfishness in children which is responsible for the terrible bitterness in relation of parents and children.

Bhagwan Dev Atma not only helped his revered parents with money but felt deeply for them whenever they were ill. Bhagwan Dev Atma passed very restless and unhappy time during their illness. He consulted physicians even at the distant place where he was posted and sent prescriptions. He once called upon his young wife to cast away her veil and serve his father. This step was the most radical one that any woman could dare to take then and in that most conservative and *purdah*-ridden family. But Bhagwan Dev Atma could not permit a social evil to stand in the way of his gratitude. Both he and his most noble wife thought it their greatest privilege in life to relieve the sufferings of Bhagwan's parents.

MINISTERING TO THEIR SOUL-WELFARE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was solicitous not only for the physical needs of his parents but what was unique, was that he also felt deeply for their soul-welfare. Since even in his youth, he was himself unfettered by the chains of undue attachment to anything of the world, he was most anxious to help them to get freedom from such chains. The blessings that he sought of his father, are also unique. In his letter dated the 19th July, 1873, when he believed in *Brahm*, he wrote to his father as under :—

"I desire that you may offer the following prayer to *Sat Chit Anand*, (i.e., *Brahm*), 'O God of Light! Have mercy upon my son, keep him above all the low gratifications of the world and make him worthy of true salvation.' Such a prayer by you is quite enough for me. *Beyond this, please do not pray for the attainment of anything worldly for me because such things are transitory.*"

(Italics throughout are ours.)

What unique life Bhagwan possessed even at that early stage of life when he was only nineteen years of age would be evident from the following uplifting lines written by him in his letter to his revered father dated the 29th June, 1869:—

"I received your letter. I felt very sorry to read the news of the death of cousin Girdhari Lal. I submitted in my first letter and said personally even to you at Kosi, that this world is transient. It is wrong to consider anything as one's own (absolutely) or even to develop that selfish feeling which impels a man to say 'This is mine or that is mine.' We can easily realise now that my cousin has taken nothing with him, neither his lands and houses, nor wife nor gardens, etc."

On "Who is a true Brahman," Bhagwan wrote the following very significant letter to his father on the 6th May, 1873:—

"He is not a Brahman who merely applies *Sandal Tilak* to his forehead or wears sacred thread. *The true Brahman is he who struggles day and night for earning more and more of the wealth of self-knowledge* and does not waste away his privileges as a human soul. He, who is entangled in the meshes of transient wealth, is a blind and ignorant soul."

The following instructive and elevating letter dated the 15th August, 1872, reveals the beauty of Bhagwan's inner life. Bhagwan wrote to his father:—

"*The average man passes his days like a beast.* If you desire to seek the path of supreme knowledge, pray, renounce all attachment that you possess for the objects of the world. Please realise all the things of the mundane world as transient, including your own body. *Pray do not live for the delusive hopes of the worldly gain.* All such things are to be left behind. Even the body to which you bear such a closest relation day and night is not yours. One day it would also cease to be yours. Please ponder seriously why to call any body your son or father, wife or brother. All these appear as such because of the influence of *Maya*."

This is from a young man, who had not even completed his twenty-second year of his life. Even then he lived a life far above the undue attachments.

HIS SERVICE TO THEM AFTER THEIR DEATH.

Bhagwan Dev Atma teaches that the soul of man under favourable conditions *builds a new body out of the fine particles*

gathered from it at the time of the death of the gross body. His own independent investigations led him to discover the truths which are new but which are verifiable. The mere discovery of the fact of the persistence of life after death did not lead him to accept all the myths taught by other faiths about the existence of God, immortality of soul or rebirth. *He traced the sovereignty of the natural law even to life after death.* The mere fact that A lived here in gross body, say, for 50 years or more and succeeded in building a new refined body after the death of the gross one and continued his life on the finer earth, did not warrant the presumption of immortality. The same laws of life and death rule him in the next world as they ruled him when he lived on this planet. Bhagwan also teaches that, as here on this earth it is the life-power or soul of the individual himself which builds, sustains and repairs his gross body and that no other life-power of any other individual avails him; in the same way, it is the same life-power which continues, under favourable conditions, the task of building a new body and the work of maintaining and evolving it. Bhagwan Dev Atma teaches that as here on this planet no life-power could remain alive without a body, so no life-power would remain alive in the next world without a refined body.

These wonderful truths made Bhagwan to think seriously about his parents, and made him deeply anxious to discover their whereabouts and convey to them the light of his new philosophy. Through his helpers in the next world, he was able to trace them and minister to their souls and conveyed to them the happy and glorious tidings of the above unique truths.

Besides this Bhagwan Dev Atma remembered them daily in his own *Sadhan* and offered good wishes for their good up to the last day of his sojourn on this earth.

BHAGWAN'S INJUNCTIONS IN RELATION TO PARENTS.

As the discoverer of the unique philosophy of religion, he has laid down a fixed period every year for being devoted to such religious exercises as pertain to purification and sweetening of our relation with our parents and children. His remarkable teachings, which children should follow in their behaviour towards their revered parents, as given in the fourth volume of the *Dev Shashtra* are summarised below :—

It is imperative for every child—

(1) to deepen and sweeten his relationship with his parents by realising the fact that they are the authors of his being, and have brought him up, protected and educated him ;

(2) to liberate himself from every perverse behaviour in their relation and to evolve every good-producing noble feeling in their relation ;

(3) to cherish *due respect* for them, their parents and their respected relations ;

(4) to *remember their favours* and thereby evolve feelings of gratitude in their relation ;

(5) to *serve them* to the best of his abilities ; to minister unto them when they fall ill or face a calamity ; to satisfy their bodily needs, those of their family and other proper wants ; to serve such of the persons, animals or plants as are in their charge, to impart to them the light of the knowledge acquired by him ; to utilise wealth left by them for their soul-welfare ;

(6) to preserve and develop such of the virtues which he has inherited from them ; to stick to noble family traditions ; to found some institutions, hospitals, *Dharamshalas*, etc., in order to perpetuate their memory ; and to help forward any cause of public good started or worked by his parents to the extent of his ability ;

(7) to make full and complete amends for any wrong done to his parents by him, or any undue pain inflicted on them ;

(8) and to offer best wishes for them and in case of their death, to perform their last obsequies to the best of his abilities.

This short summary of the positive commandments given for children are an index to the life of Bhagwan Dev Atma that he lived on this earth. They aim at destroying selfishness resulting from the life of low-loves which have made children's memory shortest in relation to their parents and which have led thousands to practise enormities on them in order to possess their wealth, to demolish their good work, if any, and to misappropriate to themselves any property left by them for the maintenance of that good work.

This noblest relation which an average man soils by his selfishness needs complete overhauling and nothing can help us so well as to follow the unique life of Bhagwan Dev Atma and to carry out his commandments.

The most fragrant fruits which Bhagwan Dev Atma produced in this relation on this earth in the life of many of his followers are even to-day the wonder and the envy of those who know them.

II

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA AS A BROTHER.

The Dev Atma had only one brother, by name, Shri Pandit Ram Narayan Agnihotri who was ten years younger to him. It is sad that he died at the premature age of forty-five. From his very birth up to his departure from this earth, Bhagwan Dev Atma took a living interest in his physical and soul-welfare. He very keenly felt for his education too. But sad to say Shri Pandit Ram Narayan's heart was not keen on studies.

Bhagwan's father died when his brother was only thirteen years of age. Pandit Ram Narayan passed almost the whole of his life-time in his village. But he was never drawn towards the company of persons addicted to evil habits. He was a strict vegetarian, used no intoxicant like *bhang*, tobacco, wine, etc.; practised no dishonesty in his dealings, and paid off all his debts, if ever incurred. He was pure in his sexual relations and avoided all chances of quarrel with anybody. He felt deep reverence for his mother and had even greater regard and respect for Bhagwan Dev Atma than for his father. Though not very active, he managed his property well and improved his income.

RELINQUISHING THE ENTIRE PATRIMONY IN FAVOUR OF HIS BROTHER.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was aged only twenty-three when his revered father passed away. Shri Pandit Ram Narayan being only thirteen years of age was naturally a minor. But Bhagwan did not touch even a copper of the entire property of his father including cash, jewellery, part ownership in two villages, buildings, gardens, etc. So long as his revered mother was alive, he left everything at her disposal. Bhagwan arranged to have her name entered in the records of rights as a co-partner. But on the demise of his revered mother in 1885 Bhagwan Dev Atma relinquished all his rights in the property in favour of his brother. Thus from 1873 when his father died to 1929 when Bhagwan Dev Atma himself departed for *Dev Lok* he neither claimed nor received a single copper from this property. Bhagwan's extraordinary sense of self-respect and anxiety to serve his mother, brother and brother's children made it impossible for him to cast covetous eyes on the money and property of his parents or to accept any service from them, beyond what was absolutely unavoidable during his childhood. The same feeling of complete freedom from selfishness and the completely pure and disinterested love for the child of his own great benefactors—the parents—led Bhagwan Dev Atma to give up the whole of his share in the patrimony and its income to his dear brother, besides contributing himself as much as he could to his bodily and soul-welfare.

OTHER SERVICES RENDERED TO HIM.

Some mention has already been made about the keen interest which Bhagwan evinced in the educational and physical welfare of his brother in Chapter xvii of Part III of this biography. Bhagwan tried his best for his education even when Pandit Ram Narayan lived at Akbarpur with his mother, on account of the demise of their father. When he was about eighteen years of age, Bhagwan called him to Lahore and besides helping him in his education, he desired him to join the Roorkee College in the Sub-Overseer class, but he could not make up his mind to do so. Again Bhagwan desired to get him a job in some Government office but he did not like that even. He however went away to Akbarpur for some urgent piece of business and there-after lived there permanently.

It was in the year 1891, that Pandit Ram Narayan was attacked by a disease which made insidious inroad on his precious health and reduced him practically to bones. He lost all appetite. His nervous system was so badly shaken that he could not bear the presence of anybody, while the slightest sound disturbed him painfully. Physicians were called to diagnose the disease but none was able to spot it. Hence all attempts at curing him failed. When he lost all hope, he sent an intimation to Bhagwan Dev Atma of his most critical condition. Bhagwan received a great shock. He immediately consulted doctors at Lahore. It was his keen desire to bring him to Lahore so that he might attend to him personally. But as that could not be done, he sent him for his use a bottle of patent medicine recommended by a doctor. This bottle reached Panditji in time, and he began to take it as per instructions. As was but expected by Bhagwan Dev Atma, the medicine produced an immediate and miraculous change in his condition for the better. Panditji conveyed this glad news to Bhagwan in his letter dated the 12th June, 1891, the translation whereof runs thus :—

“I have duly received the medicine sent by you. I have begun its use since the 6th June. It is doing me a lot of good. I wish I had informed you of my trouble months before, and I had used this medicine instead of the medicine of the *Vaid* (native physician). The cough, which had just started has been nipped in the bud. I could not even bear to talk with anybody, but in this respect too I am getting better. I could not even sit or stand for a short time but I am able to walk some distance now. I am confident, this medicine will remove the remaining complaints too.”

Bhagwan continued to send the medicine to him and Panditji again wrote to Bhagwan in his letter dated the 20th June :—

“I received your letter. I cannot adequately express my sense of deep gratitude to you for the great help you have rendered to me in this critical condition of my health both by sending medicine for my use and writing encouraging letters to me.....You have evinced the tenderest interest in my life at this critical stage.....I have

been able to get over my nervousness by perusing your letters, and I have derived great consolation. By reading your letters I have felt, as if you were present by my side in flesh and blood. I have been feeling stronger by going through the contents of your letters.....For the last ten days I have been reading your new book of hymns. I am able to read other books and papers and thus pass my time comfortably.

"Your medicine has done me a deal of good. I could not bear the presence of anybody or talk to him. But that complaint has vanished now."

Bhagwan Dev Atma continued sending the medicine to his brother and by the end of 1891, he was completely cured.

This was not the only occasion on which Bhagwan did this kind of service to his brother. Up to the year 1900, besides suffering ordinary ailments, he was twice attacked by serious maladies and on both these occasions Bhagwan Dev Atma consulted eminent doctors and despatched to him medicines for his use which restored him to complete health.

On one occasion an unscrupulous man filed a false suit against Panditji in the court of the Collector of Cawnpore, respecting the ownership of some property. This was dismissed. But the plaintiff filed an appeal in the Allahabad High Court. Panditji had no acquaintance with any pleader at Allahabad. He wrote to Bhagwan all about the case and sought his help, Bhagwan at once responded to his request. A pleader at Allahabad was once a pupil of Bhagwan and had attended his meetings several times and profited by them. Bhagwan Dev Atma sent a letter for that pleader to his brother and asked him to see him and seek his help and advice which was duly rendered by that pleader.

MINISTERING TO THE SOUL-WELFARE OF HIS BROTHER.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was not content with merely relinquishing his share in the paternal property and helping his brother in various other ways, but as the spiritual luminary, he saw the soul of his brother too, and tried to develop it. This is a rare kind of service. It presupposes full awakening to the world of soul-life, possession of unique soul-light and unique soul-power which had manifested in Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique soul an extraordinary sympathy to nurse souls. Since Bhagwan had sacrificed his all and surrendered the whole of his most precious and unique life for the highest kind of service of the world, it was not even possible for him to grow indifferent to the soul life of his own beloved brother. It is true that Panditji did not profit much in this line. He could not assimilate to an appreciable degree Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique light and unique power which Bhagwan was deeply anxious to impart to him. But Bhagwan's genuine efforts were there all the same. The following two letters written by Bhagwan to Panditji during the period of the *Bhai Bhagni Yagya* (a period set apart for examination, purification

and elevation of the relation among brothers and sisters) would give some idea of Bhagwan Dev Atma's anxiety to awaken him to his soul-welfare. In the first letter dated the 23rd January, 1898, Bhagwan wrote to him among other things, the following :—

" A man born on this earth is most unfortunate if he fails to receive soul-awakening light, and acquire true knowledge about the evolution and dissolution of soul.....I would have considered it a great privilege if I could do some service to the soul of a good brother like you, as I am doing to others. You would without doubt benefit greatly (according to your capacity) and I too would feel blessed in having done this supreme kind of service to my own family and kinsmen if you could manage to live in the higher atmosphere of my society, the Dev Samaj and receive from me soul-knowledge and soul-consciousness. Should I ever expect a chance of doing this kind of service to you ? "

Bhagwan had also sent some money as a token of affection.

On the 16th January, 1899, Bhagwan wrote another letter to him, a portion of which is quoted here :—

" Dear brother, the life consisting of eating, drinking, sleeping or gratifying similar other purely bodily appetites, contributes nothing in promoting soul-welfare. All that, on the contrary, does harm to soul-life by growing low-loves and prompting man to evil acts. If a man dies and succeeds in forming his refined body and goes to the next world, without developing higher consciousness of his soul, he will then have to realise the heavy loss which he has suffered in the shape of his soul-degeneration and the want of higher consciousness which he failed to achieve here on this earth. That man's condition is indeed extremely pitiable who, born on this earth, cannot acquire the privilege of evolving higher forces in his soul and getting freedom from his low-loves, as far as possible.

" My dear ! It is very sad that you did not give me any good opportunity of doing this kind of higher service to your soul. I wish I, your brother, could have done to you some satisfactory service in this essential matter. I wish even now, that I may get an opportunity of doing something for the good of your soul.

" In absence of the higher forces of heart, man's soul does not grow higher. If, on the contrary, he lives in the society of persons, who are devoid of such higher forces and are slavishly driven by low-loves, he grows lower day by day. Though he lives on this earth for a certain period, the constructive power of his soul becomes gradually weaker and weaker. Such persons—whether rich or poor, literate or illiterate—sow the seeds of their present as well as their future degeneration and the ruin of their soul-life. What pains me most is, that when hundreds of other souls have derived and are deriving considerable benefit by the priceless treasures of higher life and true religion which I have discovered and acquired after immense struggles and untold sufferings, you, my own real and younger brother should be devoid of any desire to get that supreme wealth....."

In reply to this last letter, Shri Panditji gave expression to the following feelings, in his letter dated the 26th January, 1900 :—

“It is absolutely true that thousands of other persons have benefited by your special higher influences and thousands of souls have become thus blessed, but my soul with whom you feel special relation, has not availed itself of this service. You have left no stone unturned to do me this kind of service, but it is my own misfortune that I have not been able to profit by it.....”

How deeply grateful Shri Panditji felt in relation to Bhagwan can be gauged from the following few lines, of his letter written on the 26th August, 1903, to a worker of the Dev Samaj :—

“I feel deeply grateful to Shri *Maha Manya* ji, (i.e., Bhagwan Dev Atma) for his deep interest in my welfare. In this world even parents do not manifest that earnestness in the welfare of their children as he has shown in mine.”

Again, in his letter of the 7th March, 1904, he wrote :—

“Who has been so lucky in this world as I to get such a sympathetic brother? To-day I received his post card. Myself and the family people have been moved to tears while perusing its contents. In several of my serious illnesses, I have recovered solely by his practical sympathy and grace. Had he not been present on this earth, none else would have got me treated so sympathetically. We could not resist shedding tears on reading every word of his card. I have got cured from several of my such fell diseases from which I had no hope of being saved merely through his endeavours and blessings.”

It is, however, very painful that Shri Panditji could not get over his last malady and prematurely passed away.

HELPING HIS WIDOW AND CHILDREN.

Bhagwan deeply felt his premature departure from this earth. Shri Panditji left a widow and a few minor children. Bhagwan entrusted the management of the estate to an honest man and sent now and again some one from Lahore to look into the accounts and get first-hand knowledge of the affairs.

Bhagwan sent for Panditji's eldest son Pandit Shamlal then a boy of about seven years. He kept him in his family for several years, and got him educated. This young nephew became a disciple of Bhagwan in the year 1918. He is still his *sewak* and cherishes most reverential feelings for Bhagwan Dev Atma and his society.

BHAGWAN'S INJUNCTIONS IN RELATION TO BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

Relation between brothers and sisters is a most intimate one. Next to one's relation to parents, it is the closest, as the same blood runs through them. Hence all that is fundamentally expected is the

evolution of higher aversion to harm one another and supreme anxiety to contribute to one another's good by making all kinds of proper sacrifices. If every brother or sister possessed a heart which shrank from doing any harm to one another, and felt impelled to contribute as much as possible to one another's happiness, there would be an end to all disharmony in this sweet relation. But, ruled by low-loves and low-hates, men become callous even in such nearest and dearest relation and ruled by greed, jealousy, vindictiveness, selfishness, etc., they poison their inner springs and make the relation hellish.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's personal example is an unfailing beacon light to guide us, as to how we could bring about the highest harmony in this relation. He has not only left the fragrance of his personal example for us, but he has also left for our guidance such injunctions the fulfilment whereof is bound to sweeten this tie, and promote its true usefulness in the lives of those who can practise them.

We give here a summary of the positive injunctions laid down for us by Bhagwan :—

Every brother and sister—

(a) ought to realise the closest relation, he or she bears to his or her brothers and sisters as the children of his or her own mother or father or of both and ought to liberate his or her heart from all perverse courses of life and evolve every good-producing higher feeling or force in their relation ;

(b) ought to express true respect in one another's relation in their daily behaviour or correspondence ;

(c) ought to develop true love for one another by higher talks, regular correspondence, by joining at common table, in games, in exercises, in walk, by giving gifts, by associating in domestic rites, ceremonials and on festive occasions, etc., of each other ;

(d) ought to recount the benefits received at one another's hands and thus develop feeling of true gratitude ;

(e) ought to respect the just rights of one another and observe all just and legal rules in the division of properties left by their father or ancestors ;

(f) ought to co-operate with one another in all their good undertakings, protect them from sins and crimes, educate them according to their means, develop noble character in them according to their capacities, minister unto them during their illness and, in case they are poor, give them all possible shelter and help and should ensure the same amenities to their helpless widows and children to the extent of their ability ;

(g) on becoming conscious of any sin ought to make full amends for it in their relation ;

(h) ought to offer good wishes for all of their brothers and sisters.

This short summary reveals one great fact that in every relation the highest good of man lies in evolution of higher consciousnesses and higher feelings thereby proving least harmful and most serviceable. It is such a life which would extinguish the fires of hell fanned into flames, as they are, by low-loves and low-hates.

III

BHAGWAN'S RELATION WITH OFFICERS AND SUBORDINATES.

1. AS A SUBORDINATE.

At the age of eighteen Bhagwan Dev Atma passed his Lower Subordinate Test at Roorkee and entered Government service. He was posted on Agra Canal where he served for about seven months. He then got himself transferred to his College as Assistant Surveying Master. For about two years and a quarter, he ably occupied that post. Then he passed the Upper Subordinate Test and was consequently posted as Overseer in the Railway Engineering Department. After about ten months, and after great struggle and huge effort he again returned to his College as Head Surveying Master. Roorkee had the greatest attraction for him because his beloved *Guru* was alive and he lived there. He put in there, a further period of service for about one year and a half when he finally left the place for Lahore where he was posted as Drawing and Surveying Master in the Government High School. This took place in the year 1873. In the month of December 1882, he ultimately resigned his post and took up his unique life-vow.

As a subordinate, Bhagwan impressed his officers remarkably. It was the Principal of his College, who while reviewing his service, wrote: "He promises to become a man of mark." That same Principal did the most valuable service to humanity when he (on Bhagwan's seeking his advice) counselled him to choose for his future career, the post at Lahore—the Capital of the Punjab—where he felt that the progressive nature of Bhagwan would find the most suitable atmosphere and opportunities for growth and evolution.

If we analyse the motive forces which made Bhagwan Dev Atma's life as a subordinate, a blessing to himself and his superiors, we would find that intrinsically they were the unique forces of love for good, which could not permit any compromise with wrong or evil and which made it imperative on him to stand firm and solidly for what is good and true. It became impossible for him to disobey any right orders. He cultivated an unflinching habit of ever remembering the tasks assigned to him. He felt that failure meant inviting evil which he could not tolerate. It was his habit to perform his tasks in time and to do them not in a slipshod manner, but in the best possible way. *This wonderful trait of doing things in or before time and doing them to his best, assumed a glorious form in Bhagwan Dev Atma's life.* Bhagwan simply abhorred the spirit of procrastination, dilatoriness or doing things perfunctorily and consequently spoiling them. He left nothing to chance and allowed nothing to interfere with the faithful performance of his tasks to the best of his efforts.

His attitude towards his superiors was one of deep respect for their position and their right orders. The evil that springs from wrong attitude towards superiors and the neglect in obeying their right orders, in time and to the best, was repugnant to his goodness-loving nature ; while the good that ensued out of paying true respect to them and obeying their right orders loyally and most faithfully, was very attractive to him. It is the lack of this spirit which poisons the relation of subordinates with their superiors. They are not unoften found pouring out vials of wrathful abuses on the head of their officers behind their back, and would readily disobey even right orders, provided they had no fear of dismissal. One rarely comes across a person who obeys his superior as such and feels all right orders from him as sacred trust to be faithfully executed.

While reviewing the story of evolution of his *Dev Jiwan*, Bhagwan Dev Atma says at one place :—

“ From the time I entered the Government service, I used to do all my duties to the best of my ability and thus proved a source of satisfaction to my superiors. Not only did I attend to my duties with a devotion and performed them thoroughly well, but whenever I received right orders from my superiors relating to my duties, I felt *bound* by my inner character-forces to accomplish them even though they militated against my personal inclination, or habit or bodily rest.”

It was but natural that, as a result of this, his superiors not only felt satisfied with him, but entertained very deep respect for him. In 1871 his Principal remarked, “ He is a man of considerable ability, great energy and application.” In 1872 the Principal reported, that he “ has exerted *canamore* to carry out my wishes in this respect and to extract the maximum amount of work from his class.” At another place, the Executive Engineer under whom he served, remarked, “ I have always found him an active, energetic and intelligent man and well up to superintending work.”

This uniform opinion of his superiors, that he is well up in extracting the maximum work from his students and in superintending work, shows Bhagwan's determined efforts to carry out *canamore* the wishes and orders of his superior officers.

When Bhagwan Dev Atma submitted his resignation from the Government service to take up his unique life-vow, the Headmaster remarked, “ I am very sorry that you are going.”

His principal at Roorkee tried his best to retain him at Roorkee and even suggested that if Bhagwan Dev Atma was going out of Roorkee in order to secure higher pay, he (the Principal) would make that good. But Bhagwan Dev Atma assured him that money was no consideration with him. He would agree to go even on a lower pay. The fact was, that from the time he lost his beloved *guru*, he lost all attraction for Roorkee. The Principal asked Bhagwan to train up his subordinate who was to succeed him and to certify that his subordinate was sufficiently trained to carry out

efficiently his duties and then alone he would agree to part with him. Throughout his career his superiors felt it a deep loss to part with him. Such was the behaviour of one who was to evolve (because of his unique heredity and nature) a personality, head and shoulders, above the entire mankind.

He has thus left for us in his own life an ideal which, if followed, is bound to make our lives a uniform blessing to ourselves and to the office we occupy as subordinates.

Following is the summary of the teachings he has left for subordinates or servants to carry out in relation to their officers or masters :—

1. That every subordinate or servant must feel his relation with his superior or master as *Dharmic* (based on higher life) and thus realise the need of liberating himself from all evil-producing tendencies and of developing all goodness-producing forces.

2. That he should cherish feelings of true respect for and obedience to his superior and carry out all such orders and wishes of his master, as he is duty-bound to comply with. Besides this, he must try to listen attentively to the orders of his master, ever to remember them and to turn out work at least commensurate to the money he receives.

3. That he must develop the habit of doing his duties in relation to his master with devotion and in all willingness. He must do his duties as best as he can and within the appointed time.

4. That he must learn to humbly acknowledge his faults, or sins, in relation to his master and must tender due apologies for them.

5. That if he has put his master to any loss by any of his improper acts or neglect of duty, he must compensate him according to his capacity. If he has inflicted any undue pain on his master, he must do his best to heal it by making adequate amends.

6. That he must take permission of his master for absence from duty and he must give due notice to his master, if he wants to leave his service.

7. That it is his duty to forewarn his master, if, to his knowledge, any danger threatens him (*i.e.*, his master) and should stand up in defence if anybody improperly attacks the character of his master in his presence.

8. That he must prove himself absolutely trustworthy in relation to his master.

9. That he must make it a point to appreciate any noble trait, which he finds in his master and relate it to others and thus deepen his good feelings towards his master.

10. That he must develop feeling of gratitude towards his master for any special favours that he may have received at his hands.

11. That on special occasions he must serve his master beyond his ordinary duties. He must come to his help at the hour of calamity. He must do all possible nursing when his master falls ill. He should also help in nursing any of the ailing relations of his master in accordance with his wishes. When necessary he should tender respectfully his advice to his master, whether consulted or not. Under favourable conditions and when able to do so, he must try to liberate his master or his dependents from their evils and develop in them any noble trait.

12. That he must offer best wishes for the good of his master and his dependents.

All these teachings aim at cultivating and deepening this relation, on the basis of mutual higher love and good-producing feelings.

2. AS A MASTER OR SUPERIOR.

We have shown that as a subordinate Bhagwan Dev Atma manifested a wonderful sense of duty and responsibility and an earnest desire to respect the person and wishes of those placed over him. It is commonly said, that the best soldier makes the best general. One who can discipline himself into obedience, can command obedience from others. The Dev Atma was so constituted that he could not disobey a right order as that would cause evil. As a lover of goodness it was impossible for him to let evil rule either in his own life or where he could help to remove it. That same love made it imperative on him, to respect the rights of those placed under him, as also not to permit them to neglect their duties or to disobey right orders or to show any behaviour fatal to this higher union. Bhagwan Dev Atma himself remarks in his autobiography :—

“During my tenure as a Government servant, I had to exercise control over others in various capacities. Since I was ruled by goodness-based higher feeling of the sense of duty, I not only felt bound to obey every right command of my superiors, but dominated by the same higher force, I felt bound to make my subordinates obey all my right commands. It is this principle of discipline which when carried out, produces good, and which, when defied, produces evil. Since by the very constitution of my soul I could not compromise with evil, I felt it incumbent upon me as a subordinate to obey right orders, as well to make my subordinates respect the discipline and carry out all the right orders.”

We have already given instances in Part III of how Bhagwan Dev Atma brought to their senses two of his subordinates, whom he had superseded and who wanted to create trouble and, how he compelled the military students to obey and observe the principles prevailing in the College.

But the spirit that animated Bhagwan's conduct was not that of a hard task master. It is true that as a teacher he took maximum work from his students; as a supervisor of examinations he kept

back the students from using unfair means and as an officer he exercised effective and wholesome discipline over his subordinates; but, at the same time, Bhagwan Dev Atma felt, in fact, a sort of *Dharmic* relationship with his servants and subordinates.

Sh. Pandit Sant Ram served as a personal attendant of Bhagwan for many years. He used to cook for Bhagwan, to accompany him on his walks, attend to gardening under Bhagwan's directions and to do other domestic duties. When he joined service he was quite a raw young man. He grew grey in Bhagwan's service. He did not marry.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's treatment of him has left for us a living and wonderful example to follow. Bhagwan Dev Atma did not think merely of taking work from him and paying him his fixed salary in time but he felt bound to treat him as a soul in his charge and hence deserving all-sided attention for his well-being. Under Bhagwan's influences Pandit Sant Ram, slowly and gradually, made advance in mental, moral and higher life-powers. Bhagwan rescued him from various sins and evils. By pledging to refrain permanently from eight specified sins he became a *sewak* of Bhagwan. By the most elevating *Dev Prabhavs* (highest psychic influences emanating from Bhagwan Dev Atma) he got over his feverish desire for marriage. As a matter of fact his means were not at all adequate for such a responsibility. He became a well disciplined man, and developed a fair sense of duty. This capacity and the capacity to successfully face life's situations which he evolved under the kind care of Bhagwan is rarely found even among most of the graduates of our land. His brain powers broadened and he could understand abstruse principles relating to soul-life of man better than even many of the highly educated persons. He was liberated from various false beliefs and superstitions, which still dominate the large majority, even of the literate portion of India. He was enabled to study Bhagwan's unique writings. His reverence for Bhagwan and gratitude towards him for all the benefits he received became deep. He came to realise the greatest privilege of living at the feet of Bhagwan. He brought his widowed sister and placed her in Dev Samaj environments and this lady rose to be a distinguished lady worker of the Dev Samaj and died serving the Dev Samaj Girls' High School, Ferozepore, a premier institution in the Punjab.

Bhagwan Dev Atma made the Pandit a trustworthy character and trusted him on special occasions. Bhagwan gave him gifts also. Thus not only did Bhagwan pay him for his service in money, but evolved his brain and heart wonderfully, and gave a tone to his soul which would do credit to any person.

It was Dewali festival night and the Pandit was expected to carry out the illuminations of the *Devalya*. But this duty was taken up by others. Those who had undertaken the task did not perform it in time. Want of faithfulness to time engagements was absolutely intolerable to Bhagwan. As he was not apprised of the fact, that

others had undertaken the duty and that the Pandit was not to do the illuminations, Bhagwan Dev Atma expressed his displeasure at the conduct of the Pandit. Panditji had gone out. When he returned, he came to know, how Bhagwan had felt his supposed failure to attend to his duties. He at once approached Bhagwan and cleared his position. It was a heavenly sight to see how deeply Bhagwan felt for the wrong opinion unknowingly expressed in relation to the Pandit. Bhagwan Dev Atma sent for those placed on that duty, and expressed his pain and annoyance at their conduct in having kept mum, when Bhagwan showed his displeasure against the Pandit. Bhagwan Dev Atma expressed his personal feelings to the Pandit to assuage any pain he had suffered. This had wonderfully elevating influence on all of us. Bhagwan has left instruction that Panditji is to be paid a fixed amount of money unconditionally merely as pension for life. But Panditji as a great devotee is doing willing service to our *mandir* at Solan.

Gaya Din is another servant who worked in the garden of Bhagwan Dev Atma. This man became so much influenced by Bhagwan's kind treatment, that he felt deep reverence for him. This enabled him to put his heart and soul into his duty without any supervision, and thus won golden opinion of Bhagwan. Once, on the last day of the period devoted in the Dev Samaj to examining and bettering the relation of servants and masters, Bhagwan Dev Atma sent for Gaya Din, garlanded him with his own hands, gave him presents and expressed his feelings of appreciation and respect for the good traits of the servant. This extreme condescension by the one true highest worshipful being towards one, whose class is ordinarily considered to be very insignificant, shows that Bhagwan Dev Atma never believed any human being as insignificant because of his low social position. He felt intimately close relation with the whole mankind and established truly *Dharmic* relation with servants as fellow human beings, who are serviceable units of society and entitled to our respect, our gratitude and our best treatment. Even for Gaya Din Bhagwan Dev Atma has left positive instruction that he is to be paid on *Bharit Swami Brat* day certain fixed amount as gift.

Once a building of Bhagwan Dev Atma was under repairs and a labourer was working there. Bhagwan Dev Atma saw him standing without work. At another time also when Bhagwan Dev Atma inspected the work, he found the man doing nothing. Bhagwan felt that the labourer was lazy and he expressed such opinion to the supervisor of the work. The supervisor assured Bhagwan that that man was, in fact, the best labourer and by a sheer accident he was found, on both occasions, resting after hard labour. Bhagwan felt so very deeply sorry for having done injustice to that labourer even in thought, that he sent money compensation to the labourer to make amends even for the mere incorrect impressions formed about him, and of which that man had no knowledge even.

What a superb sight of an ideal relation of master towards servants!

An instance of extreme solicitude which Bhagwan displayed for those who did honorary or even paid service to him, who though not exactly servants in the accepted sense of the word, but all the same were his subordinates, was thus described by a worker of Dev Samaj in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for April 1916. This also illustrates Bhagwan's most sacred attitude even towards those who worked as his subordinates.

The anecdote runs as under :—

"Last December, (i.e., 1915) I had the good fortune of doing some slight writing work in the office of Bhagwan. There were several things, which touched me deeply. It appeared that every need of ours (i.e., workers) was anticipated by Bhagwan and previously provided for. If a chair was placed for me, it was a beautiful chair. On the table were all the materials ready for use. The table cloth was not only a neat one, but it was of a good quality. The pen provided and the inkpot placed there were of superior quality. What struck me most was Bhagwan's solicitous regard for any person who came to work for his cause. The whole room seemed to say "Heartily respects to one who does the Master's work." I know how insignificant a person I am before the most worshipful Bhagwan Dev Atma. But Bhagwan views with sacred feelings all services, trivial or otherwise, which help the cause of evolution."

It is these sacred feelings of viewing all existences with respect (according to their station in life and their services) which elevate human relation from beastly into heavenly ones.

The teachings which Bhagwan has left for us on the relation that a master or superior must bear to his servant or subordinate are very elevating. A short summary of these is given below :—

Every master or officer ought to—

(1) *feel his servant or subordinate as an indispensable and serviceable unit* for himself and thus realise his deep and sacred relation with him (servant). He should feel it a privilege on special occasions to do him some very good turn in the form of special service. He should feel the need of liberating himself from every evil-producing feeling and developing every goodness-producing force in his soul in relation to his servant;

(2) *pay to his servant due respect* according to his position and station of life, join with him on all occasions conducive to his gain or happiness, express his appreciation for any extraordinary services rendered by him or give him some suitable gift;

(3) *put as much trust in his servant as his (servant's) past life may have proved him worthy of.* He should return, when required, anything which the servant may have trusted to his care.

(4) save his servant from misunderstanding his orders by making them very clear, definite and precise. He should issue only such commands to the servant as the latter may be bound by his conditions of service to obey and take work from him only to the proper extent or as provided in those conditions.

(5) pay his servant his monthly or other wages in time.

(6) give his servant sufficient time daily for his personal needs and ordinarily one day's holiday in a week.

(7) render necessary help to his servant at the time of his physical illness or other trouble and bestow special benefits on an old and honest servant or his relations, as also minister to his higher evolution.

(8) content himself with merely warning or rebuking a servant for any of unintentional lapses of duty, but in case he is guilty of any intentional mischief, he should be given only such punishment as should in no case be disproportionate to or in excess of his fault. He should overlook the ordinary faults of his servant.

(9) make proper amends for any wrong done by him to his servant, of which he may become conscious.

(10) offer best wishes for the welfare of his old faithful servants or servants who have done some specially good service.

These are only positive commandments. There are several negative ones also and all these have proved a unique blessing in the lives of many of the followers of Bhagwan Dev Atma.

IV

BHAGWAN AS A HUSBAND.

Bhagwan Dev Atma has laid down as one of the necessary conditions for admission into the Dev Samaj as a member that one must give up and pledge to permanently refrain from adultery and all kinds of unnatural offences, *as also not to remarry during the life-time of the wedded partner*. Even those connected with the Dev Samaj as mere sympathisers have to be free from the sin of adultery. Bhagwan Dev Atma has also set his face against divorce. Cases have occurred of extreme type in his Samaj. A so-called untouchable member's wife left his roof, and went and lived with another. The member remarried, but his name was removed from the registers of the Samaj as a member. The wife of another young member of good family was almost insane and uncontrollable. He remarried. But this step was not looked upon with approval. He ceased to be a member though he is connected with the Dev Samaj as a sympathiser. A rich seth who had made a great gift of money to Bhagwan's *Bhaint* Fund remarried since he had no male child. His own wedded wife is said to have persuaded him to take the step. Yet he was discharged from the membership of the Samaj.

Remarriage during the life-time of one's wife or husband under any circumstances is penalised by the Dev Samaj. The principle underlying this condition is that for the sake of a few exceptional cases, the relaxation of law would create more mischief in the society at large than the relief obtained by those exceptional cases. Marriage should be based on the higher union of hearts. The legislation and spiritual teachings should offer all possible ways and means of strengthening this tie and leave nothing to the whims or weaknesses of the couples to disturb it. In cases where children are born divorce is an unmitigated curse. Even otherwise it is a temptation to loosen this sacred tie.

On the 17th March, 1908, Bhagwan Dev Atma delivered an address on the relation of husband and wife—a short report of which was published in the *Jivan Path* (a Hindi journal of the Dev Samaj) from which we translate a part to indicate and illustrate Bhagwan Dev Atma's point of view :—

“What is the import of marriage relation? Before the pair is wedded, the girl is an ordinary person, and so is the bridegroom. By means of a certain ceremony they are brought together. What is the basis of their union ordinarily? As a rule it is the gratification of sexual desire which is at the bottom of this union. Frequently their thoughts and actions have their spring in this desire. They have no higher purpose about their married life. They almost never talk with each other about the evolution and degeneration of their

soul-life. They never talk of the ways and means of getting freedom from any evil, wrong or sinful course of life. Ordinarily they hold no councils to make their family circle noble and higher or to make their own relation *Dharmic*, i.e., productive of higher life. *How can this relation be pure and higher when they look upon each other merely with an eye of lust in order to satisfy their sexual desire? How can this relation be ennobled when the pair indulges openly in sexual talk and sexual jokes?* Hundreds of educated men find no satisfaction in each other's society as long as they do not indulge in sexual talk and indecent jokes. In our land the Holi Festival accentuates this sexual phase of man's life most vividly. Openly indecent songs are sung, impure talk is indulged in, vulgar jokes are cut with women and it often becomes difficult for them to pass through streets in those days. As a slave to palate feels no mercy whatsoever for a dumb, useful or innocent animal, and either kills it himself or gets it killed for his table, and all appeals of mercy and justice fall flat on his ears; in the same way, a sexual lust-ridden man gets perverted by lust when he looks at a woman and involuntarily cherishes evil thoughts. His vision, clouded by lust, is not able to perceive any higher trait in the character of any woman. He does not form his relation with woman on the basis of some higher and noble force or feeling. What a deplorable state is this!

"Sexual desire is not in itself an evil. In absence of this function there can be no propagation of human species and no perpetuation of the race. But slavery to this desire robs a young man of the blessings of youth and makes him a bankrupt in the world of mental and moral life. This is the reason why most of our people maintain and enjoy youth only for a very limited period. How painful is such a destiny for our boys and girls, men and women! Can our nation advance in strength and vigour when species of such a weak kind are brought into this world? The spirit of Brahmacharya, therefore, is one great necessity for man, not only when he is unmarried but even when he is wedded and has a partner in life. It is of supreme necessity that one should free his heart from the control of lust. In absence of the freedom of heart from the dominance of lust, the marriage relation can never become holy and pure. Nor would man be able to cherish feelings of true respect for woman-kind, and the attitude of man towards woman in general would never grow higher and nobler. A writer has remarked that the civilised state of any race or nation can be gauged from the amount of true respect which men feel for women and the nature of relation which they establish with the fair sex. It is to be gauged from the fact whether they can co-operate and work in matters relating to higher purposes of life. Would that man may get free from the degrading condition of heart due to the dominance of lust, and the relation between husband and wife and men and women get purer and higher."

Bhagwan Dev Atma's own life in relation to his wedded partner has left for us a living higher type of relation, which is bound to

liberate marriage tie from the grip of lust and establish it on the basis of higher feelings, leading fit people to think seriously of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual welfare of the wedded partner.

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA'S LIFE IN RELATION TO HIS FIRST WIFE.

Bhagwan Dev Atma was married very early when he was hardly twelve years of age to a girl aged eleven years only—the only child of her parents. Her name was Shrimati Lilawatiji. As was to be expected in those times she was completely illiterate. And yet when she passed away on the 25th December, 1880, a gentleman from Multan wrote, "She belonged to the class of those who deserve the title of emancipators of women." An Arya gentleman wrote, "She was not an ordinary woman. This land has really suffered a heavy loss in her death as we expected great work from her in national uplift." A gentleman from Ambala wrote, "I would not have suffered so much pain on the death of my own wife, as I have suffered at the death of your wife. The passing away of such a pure and good woman who felt so much for the good of our country, is not only a dead loss for you and for me, but it is a source of great shock and loss for all Punjab women."

Elevating her Mentally.—How an altogether illiterate girl who was born and married in the family of most orthodox Brahmans who observed strict veil and who anathematised female education and their moving in the public, should have risen on the national firmament, as one of the brightest stars among women is a story not without its lesson for us and is a living illustration of the unique type of relation which Bhagwan bore to her.

After the wedding Shrimati Lilawatiji had been taken back, as is the custom among Hindus, to her parent's house and after about three years by another ceremony she was brought to her husband's house.

There is no doubt that she brought with herself a remarkable disposition. She identified herself completely with the new environments in her new home and won the heart of her good mother-in-law. She was very industrious and found joy in all domestic work. She possessed genuine respect for elders and a spirit of obedience to their right orders.

When Shrimati Lilawatiji came to permanently live in Bhagwan's house, he had shortly after to go out to Roorkee for education. So his heart felt the urgency of blessing her with the light of education. His mother was opposed to women being educated. But as it was intolerable for Bhagwan to see his wedded partner illiterate, so he instructed her to learn Hindi from the two ladies whom he had already taught himself. This expression of the deep wish of her husband, Sh. Lilawatiji felt as a command which had to be obeyed. She at once began learning Hindi. But since her mother-in-law was opposed to this, she used to keep her books hidden somewhere on the upper storey of the house. Whenever she found

time, she used to go into the house of these ladies (one a Bhagwan's niece and another his cousin's wife) and learn Hindi. She applied herself most devotedly to this and within a few months she was able to read and write Hindi. Afterwards in the year 1869 when Bhagwan was appointed Assistant Surveying Master at Roorkee, he called his wife there and then began her education personally.

"It is expected of truly educated man," says Bhagwan, "to find joy and enthusiasm in spreading education. But often it is found that a Hindu, who is himself educated, does not like to educate his own wife, owing to the influence of superstition or his low nature, while the orthodox woman neither likes to be herself educated, nor permits her women relations to be educated."

Even to-day we rarely find an educated husband anxious to see his wife progressing in education. Of late there has been a demand by the educated men for educated wives. An England-returned man likes to marry a college girl or a graduate. This is at the back of parents' anxiety to educate their girls, as otherwise they would not be able to secure suitable bridegrooms for them. But all this does not at all indicate that the educated men are anxious to spread education. Their wives, as a rule, not only make no further progress after marriage but generally retrograde. There is an example of an E.A.C. who married a girl who had received some education. Ten years after her marriage, she had forgotten almost everything.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's life illustrates to a remarkable extent, deep hatred against compromising with ignorance, superstition, indifference towards progress, etc. Hence when he was only nineteen years of age and his wife came to live with him, he began teaching her Urdu. After several months of learning, she acquired proficiency in reading Urdu books.

In 1875 when Bhagwan worked at Lahore, he inspired her to learn Bengali. This language possessed literature which was far ahead of the literature of other places in India. Bhagwan Dev Atma was deeply desirous of opening that world to her. In 1878 with the same object in view Bhagwan commenced to teach her English language too. He also engaged a teacher for her for that purpose.

But that was not enough. Bhagwan could not bear keeping his own knowledge to himself which he acquired from his study. Whatever new knowledge he acquired, he shared it with his wife. Thus in the constant association of her most learned husband, she acquired deep and extensive knowledge on social, moral, political and spiritual matters. Her world of information became wider than that of millions of men. This enlightenment revealed to her the absurdity of several conventions, superstitions and customs. She learned to love knowledge and higher life and felt deeply for the condition of her sex, enslaved as it was in the chains of superstitions and evil social customs. As her heart was full of sympathy, this growing consciousness impelled her to work among her sex and emancipate

them from the dwarfing thralldom. Thus from an illiterate girl she was raised (by her great husband) to the position of a cultured, well-informed and deeply sympathetic lady worker. Her marriage, therefore, not only gave her comforts of home and family, but proved the most blessed source for her great mental and soul-evolution.

Ministering to her higher life.—Bhagwan could not bear to neglect the most important service of ministering to the higher life of his wedded partner. Hence when in 1869 Bhagwan called her to Roorkee and began teaching her Urdu, he also started her on reading *Gita* and other religious books. When Bhagwan got initiation as a disciple of his most noble *guru*, he prepared his good wife to take the same step. Thus both developed in new life side by side or walked this new path hand in hand. When *guruji* passed away, both felt deeply pained. After the death of their *guru*, Bhagwan became the sole teacher of his wife in the domain not only of education but of higher life.

Higher influence of Bhagwan enabled Shrimati Lilawatiji not only to distinguish between what is right and wrong in social customs and time-honoured rites and conventions, but also to give up what she knew to be false and harmful. She acquired the rare soul-power to act up to her convictions in accordance with her knowledge and faith. She hated to be insincere. Hence when she felt any custom or rite or superstition, etc., as wrong, she abjured it at once. Thus her beliefs and practices harmonised.

In her community it was considered wrong to put on shoes, shirt, jacket, etc. She felt this custom as absurd. She began using these things. She came to realise that nose-ring is unnecessary though it is believed to be the symbol of married life. She put it off. She came to believe that lot of ornaments worn by Indian ladies were mere waste, so she put them off. In 1869 when she had come to live with her husband at Roorkee, her mother-in-law had accompanied her. She stayed there for three months. Then she intended to return to Akbarpore. Before she left, she asked Lilawatiji to return the lent ornaments to her and to retain her own. Shrimati Lilawatiji communicated this to her husband. Bhagwan told her to return not only the mother's ornaments, but even those of her own. She at once complied with this. This detached state of heart towards ornaments is an absolutely rare trait in women folk who value the possession of ornaments deeply.

There was a custom in her community to make their sons to put on ornaments as well. She came to realise it to be wrong and therefore gave up that custom altogether.

In her community most strict veil was observed. Women were confined within four walls. If they moved out they were taken in Sedan chairs. In 1875, Bhagwan changed his quarters from the heart of city to Anarkali. By that time Shrimati Lilawatiji had come to realise the futility of veil. She therefore herself requested her

husband to permit her to give up the custom of being taken in Sedan chair. Bhagwan was already desirous for this. She therefore began moving out on foot. She gave up *purdah* and began moving freely in the public which startled the public of those days. She used to sit with her husband in carriage and go out for a drive. When her husband used to deliver his speeches in Sikshya Sabha Hall, she accompanied him and attended those public meetings. This was an absolutely new step for a Hindu lady in the Punjab in those days. Her courage was wonderful. She was the first lady in her community to speak with her father-in-law and keep no veil in his presence. Bhagwan's father was ill. This happened when she was hardly sixteen years of age. Bhagwan was then at Roorkee. He asked her in a letter to go with unveiled face to his father and enquire about his condition direct. This step required indeed a marvellous courage which she showed at such a young age, all alone in the midst of the conservative male and female relatives. When we find even to-day the largest portion of the educated persons knowingly following a bad custom because of their dread of the public opinion, it indeed speaks volumes in favour of this singular girl who cast it off in the very den of conservatism.

Shrimati Lilawati had also come to realise the absurdity of untouchability in food and she gave that up altogether. Once at Roorkee, she was cooking when Bhagwan asked her if meals were ready. She said, "yes". Then he asked her, "Should I enter *chauka* dressed as I am?" She said, "by all means come in, there is no objection." Bhagwan entered *chauka* and took meals in his full dress. According to the prevalent custom, one had to enter *chauka* and take meals with only one *dhoti* on. Shrimati Lilawati felt the strangeness of it for the first time. But this untouchability in food she gave up for all time.

As soon as she came to realise their absurdity and harmfulness, she also gave up all the unmeaning practices observed by Indian ladies at the time of child-birth.

She had also lost belief in the superstitions usually prevalent in Hindu homes that disease is due to the influence of stars, and that, in order to escape any malady, the patient or his relations must give something to Brahmans to avert it. Once when Bhagwan was at Roorkee, he fell ill. The illness was a protracted one. A Pandit, who was aware of Bhagwan's want of belief in any such superstition, sent secretly a message to Shrimati Lilawati that her husband was under the influence of some inauspicious star and that if she wished well of him, she should propitiate, that star. The Pandit did not know that Shrimati had come to realise the absurdity of this superstition. She therefore refused point blank to do anything of the sort. Moreover she snubbed the Pandit for his having sent the message to her secretly and not through her husband.

When she was living at Lahore, her second son—a babe then—fell seriously ill. The physician suggested to her that besides using

medicines, she should do something to propitiate the stars. Even though her little dear son was ill, yet unlike thousands of Indian women, she refused to do so, saying that she had no faith in such a superstition. She continued the medicine and the nursing, and the child at last recovered from that malady.

Life of husband or of child is the most precious thing to almost all women and especially to Hindu women. Not only Hindu women but also Hindu men are seen yielding to any temptation of this kind for the sake of the life of their children even though they may not believe in them. Women are the easiest prey in the hands of Brahmans, so-called *sadhus*, *fakirs*, or medical quacks, once their natural weaknesses are excited through superstition and fear.

It therefore speaks most eloquently not only of the enlightened intellect but heroic heart of Shrimati Lilawati who not only quickly assimilated the truths which Bhagwan imparted to her, but developed sufficient soul-power to resist any temptation for an act which she believed to be false. Even to-day how many leaders of light and learning show consistency in their beliefs and actions specially when they have to do a thing against the accepted traditions, customs, conventions and usage!

Shrimati Lilawati was so wonderfully moulded by Bhagwan Dev Atma, that she came to occupy a very high position in the life of the province. All this happened because Bhagwan Dev Atma felt his relation with her on the basis of highest psychic feelings of love for goodness and not on the basis of low-loves as is the case with the largest majority of mankind.

Besides all this, in early seventies she boldly preached against child-marriage, conventional marriage when parties are united in life-long wedlock even without seeing each other, the unmeaning and harmful social rites and ceremonies, extortionate dowry system, enforced widowhood, unfair and unjust distinction in bringing up sons and daughters, etc.

Ideal Family Life.—One of the conditions accepted by the bride and bridegroom in Hindu marriage is the union of hearts. The bride says to her bridegroom, "may this heart of mine be yours." The bridegroom also repeats the same thing. The union of hearts is the one most essential factor in making married life truly blissful. But this is the most difficult thing to attain, because in many cases temperaments vastly differ from each other. What one heart likes most, is hated by the other. In the case of many this disharmony and its resultant misery become so intolerable that they prefer to part company. This disharmony so often leads many to infidelity. It also leads to suicides. Mere wedlock therefore does not ensure domestic harmony and peace. What is wanted is the union of hearts of both on the basis of higher life.

Shrimati Lilawati lived an ideal family life. This was because she responded wonderfully to Bhagwan's anxiety and efforts made

for the development of higher and noble feelings of true *Dharma* in her heart. From the year 1869 when Shrimatiji came to live with her great husband, the evolution of her soul had become the one absorbing yearning of her husband. This soul evolution made her a co-traveller and true partner in the pilgrimage of higher life of her beloved husband. Thus this ideal became common goal for both. When both of them jointly accepted *guru*, their religious exercises also became the same. In this step too, Bhagwan had the main hand. Both determined not to deviate from truth in speech. This made them sincere and honest towards each other. Both felt deeply for the good of each other. Both offered good wishes for each other in their individual *Sadhans*. This deepened their bond of true love for each other. Both had absolute faith in each other. Both felt each other as true friend in weal and woe. They never kept anything hidden from each other. In war against falsehood, in conduct, customs, rites and ceremonies, they had to meet great opposition. But shoulder to shoulder they faced all combinations.

Shrimati Lilawati hated every sort of disharmony in her wedded relation. If she detected that by her conduct she had done something which pained Bhagwan, she became restless and could never find peace till she had appeased his heart and brought about reconciliation and union.

Thus as Bhagwan Dev Atma proved most loyal and loving husband to her and the chief or the only guide in her path of higher life, she also lived an ideal life of perfectly chaste, loyal and loving partner of Bhagwan in his most difficult path of higher life.

True servant of her sex.—Bhagwan had deep repulsion for life of selfishness in all its forms and also had the greatest love for the good of others. He developed in the heart of Shrimati Lilawati true altruistic forces which made the service of others an object of deep and abiding interest to her. She became deeply sensitive to any the least wrong done to others, and at the same time could find no rest without doing substantial service to them. She volunteered to go and teach one or the other illiterate lady in the neighbourhood.

Once a teacher of Amritsar came to Lahore for treatment along with his young wife and a baby. He put up in a house very near Bhagwan's. He had married only a year and a half back. His wife was a girl of sixteen or seventeen years. One night the patient suddenly collapsed and died. The poor young widow rent the atmosphere with her lamentations. A Hindu widow's fate is tragic. Shrimati Lilawati came to know of the misfortune of the poor girl and though Bhagwan was down with high fever at the time, yet her tender heart could not brook the girl's pathetic lamentations. She took permission of Bhagwan and ran to her help. The poor widow was cursing her baby considering it to be the cause of her father's death. Shrimati Lilawati had to minister to her heart. The widow stayed for a few days and a good deal of time Shrimatiji was with her, consoling and helping her. She found great peace in that unselfish service.

This mercy in her heart was not confined to human beings only but manifested itself towards animals as well, whom she served and tended at times.

Her feeling for widows was very tender. She once paid fifty rupees to a helpless widow from her own savings. She did not inform even her husband of this charity.

But her heart went out most to the help of those hundreds of husbands of ignorant and superstition-ridden sisters, who under the sway of low-loves and low-hates prove a source of misery to themselves and others, and make their home-life a living hell. Their hearts are torn by jealousy and quarrelsome nature. She wanted to carry to them the light she had received, in order to ameliorate their condition. She quickly availed herself of a chance which opened a way for her. Her husband used to convene meetings of young men. She called their wives and other women of their families and commenced holding meetings for their welfare. In 1878 one Istri Sabha was founded. She served them there. She also used to help those that came to her and those whom she went to visit. A lady of a very high family was so effectively changed for better by her efforts that she also started working in the cause of women uplift. So long as she lived, she felt an irrepressible urge to devote her energies to the cause of higher service of her sisters and even men.

All this noble change was brought about in her life by her distinguished husband. This in fact is the true basis of marriage and not sexual passion or worldly comforts.

This great lady died in 1880. She hardly lived for twenty-eight years. Yet these years she filled with honour, distinction and example of unselfish service. Her life was rich in noble deeds. She left behind a great example for her sisters to rise in the scale of higher life.

Her death came as the most severe shock to Bhagwan. He lost the one great companion who understood his unique aspirations and who marched with him hand in hand towards the extraordinary goal which his unique divine forces were opening before him. She was the one ministering and sincere friend in his monumental struggles. She held out to him the unfailing comfort in the hour of the greatest trials.

• BHAGWAN'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

Shrimati Lilawati left three children, the eldest of whom was hardly eight years of age and the youngest two years of age. Bhagwan Dev Atma was, besides being a teacher, also an editor, a missionary and a distinguished worker in the cause of public welfare of various kinds. There was no movement for public good in the Punjab of which he did not form the life and soul. These various activities were sufficient in themselves to engross all his time, energy and attention. But when passing away of Lilawatiji left the care of home and three children to him, Bhagwan felt the burden

unbearable. Neither could he give up his manifold public activities, nor could he leave the care of his children into the hands of servants. He sent his youngest son to Akbarpore to be brought up by his younger brother. But the elder two were schooling. He could not neglect their studies. Again, one day while returning from school in his *tonga*, the mare shied and it ran at mad speed. Bhagwan had a bad fall. He lay senseless for sometime and was brought home with serious injuries. He lay in his house uncared for with supreme anxiety for his children. These complications led him to go on furlough and at last he solved this tangle by a second marriage. He was then only thirty-one years of age. He had also now an opportunity of putting into practice in his own life his most unorthodox opinions in favour of widow-remarriage and inter-caste marriage. Hence he chose for his partner a Bengalee widow aged twenty. Bhagwan named her Savitri Agnihotri.

The following note appeared in the columns of *the Tribune* of Lahore, dated the 18th November, 1881 :—

“ Pandit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri of Lahore was married on 7th instant at Calcutta to a Bengalee widow lady. The lady is Brahman by birth (but of a different cast from Bhagwan’s—author and about twenty years old. She became a widow when she was a child of nine years . . . *The marriage, we believe, is the first of its kind where a Hindustani and Bengalee have been united by marriage.* We eagerly look for the day when such marriages will be things of everyday occurrence, for, without inter-provincial marriage, we cannot hope to be united together and become one people. We wish Pandit Shiv Narayan and his bride long life and happiness and welcome the latter to our province with great pleasure.”

This marriage saved Bhagwan from the burden of looking to the details of home-life and the task of bringing up little children. Shrimati Savitriji shouldered all these responsibilities and thus spared for her distinguished husband full time to devote single-minded all his great energies and powers to the service of his society and his motherland.

Bhagwan's services to Shrimati Savitri Agnihotri.—Only five or six months after her marriage, Shrimati Savitri Agnihotri had a most virulent attack of small-pox. The doctors pronounced that it would be a marvel if she should survive and if she did recover at all, she would have one or the other of her organs permanently injured. In that hour of her most serious illness, Bhagwan devoted himself heart and soul to give her the best attention and nursing. He was too self-respecting to appeal to anybody for help. The world rarely comes to the help of others unasked. Hence Bhagwan had to do all the nursing personally day and night. It was hot summer season. The disease itself produces heat and burning. The patient was feeling very restless. Bhagwan engaged two coolies to pull the *pankha* day and night without any stop. He engaged another servant to bring medicines and do other minor duties. The children were sent to a friend's house.

In those days Bhagwan Dev Atma edited one monthly and one weekly paper. His highly developed sense of responsibility could not brook the idea of neglecting to publish these papers in time, even in these exceptional circumstances. Hence while sitting by the sick bed of his wife, he composed his mind and wrote those masterly articles which used to be the inspiration and wonder of the readers.

Bhagwan attended to all the needs of his wife, even cleaning the bed-pan himself. He had to be all the time attentive, so that, in the agony of restlessness, she may not do anything prejudicial to her health. Besides that he had to keep her spirits up and her heart at peace.

One day a doctor warned Bhagwan that his living in the room of the patient day and night would injure his health as the atmosphere of the room was tainted. He asked him to go up the roof and pass sometime there in open air. Bhagwan considered that advice sound and proper and deputed his servant to keep watch for the time he was up on the roof. Suddenly a thought crossed his mind that the servant might have become inattentive or might even have gone to sleep as it was dusk. That thought made him uneasy. He at once ran to the patient's room. He wore slippers. While descending the stairs in haste his foot slipped and he fell down. But the injuries were not serious. On reaching his wife's room, he found that his fears were not groundless. The servant was dozing. After that day, Bhagwan never left his wife's care to other hands even for a moment.

This wonderful devotion and nursing of Bhagwan falsified the fears of the doctors and Shrimatiji recovered from that most fatal malady unscathed.

A selfish and self-seeking husband could not have manifested one-hundredth part of that care, that attention, that sacrifice, that forgetfulness of self and that genuine sympathy which were of immense utility in withstanding the onslaughts of the disease and the depression of mind.

This is the one lesson which Bhagwan's life places before us.

SERVICES TO HER SOUL.

Twice again, Shrimati Savitri Agnihotri fell seriously ill and Bhagwan ministered unto her with the same devotion and love. But above all he ministered to her soul.

Bhagwan Dev Atma came to the world to create in fit souls the highest consciousness of the good of the soul, to liberate them from all the corroding bondages of low-loves and low-hates and to evolve in them higher forces and thus bring about higher harmony in all their relations.

This love of doing the highest service was the most absorbing interest of Bhagwan's life. Hence by his lectures, sermons, conversations and other services, Bhagwan created in the soul of Shrimati Savitriji, a taste for higher things. All the worldly possessions lost value for her in comparison to the noble forces of the soul. Very gladly therefore she co-operated with Bhagwan Dev Atma when at the prime age of thirty-two, he resolved to resign his permanent Government job carrying a salary of Rs. 150 a month with very bright prospects. This was in the month of December 1882 when the purchasing power of a rupee was many times more than it now is. Not only Bhagwan but Shrimati Savitriji was also aware of what that change would mean for the family. But she had caught the glimpse of the glorious goal of her beloved husband and hence, on the day that the ceremony, in which Bhagwan was to embrace his unique life-vow, was performed, she accompanied him dressed in the *sadhu*-coloured dress like him. It was a most elevating sight to see her publicly accepting the robe of a *Sadhini* in company of her lord who became a *Brahm Sanyasi*.

Bhagwan had to curtail his expenses. He had to move to a cheap house in the city which was very small and low roofed, since he could not afford high rent. In that house Shrimati Savitriji who was in a family way, was confined. The space was most insufficient for such an occasion. But she never complained. The light she had received from her husband, the deep reverence and devotion she felt for him, made the task of bearing physical discomforts very easy, with calm and gallant heart. Such an attitude of mind which is born of higher motives of conduct distinctly and pre-eminently elevates the wedded life.

The consciousness of higher ideal was not the only higher sense which Bhagwan Dev Atma developed in her. Consciousness against sin also grew and evolved in her. Whenever the thought of any impurity of soul caused by lower feelings or actions crossed her mind, she used to burst into tears and took measures to clean her heart. Consciousness of her own defects and the beauty of higher traits in others made her heart humble and developed a noble attitude of prayerfulness in her.

She married on the 7th November, 1881, and died on 22nd April, 1885. During this short period of nearly three years and a half, she fell very seriously ill three or four times. Her husband's most devoted services pulled her out of these critical situations. But the last illness proved fatal. It was an attack of tuberculosis. She was taken to Calcutta for a change of climate and treatment. On the 9th April, 1885, Bhagwan received a telegram that her condition had taken a critical turn. Bhagwan immediately left for Calcutta and on reaching there, he found to his deep sorrow that her condition was hopeless. On the 18th April she called her husband to her side and said, "I did not quite understand thy worth before. But I do so now. Permit me to take sip of water touched by thy feet. I regret

that I contributed nothing to the service of the world during my life-time." Bhagwan consoled her. She continued, "I have been praying daily. I am not afraid of death. Nay, I am quite ready for it." On the 22nd she called Bhagwan to her side, laid her aching head on his shoulder and requested him to pray for her which he did. She then laid her head in his lap and calmly passed away.

The note that appeared in the columns of the Indian daily of the Punjab, *The Tribune*, was as under:—

"The numerous friends of our townsman, Pt. S. N. Agnihotri, would be sorry to hear the sad news of the death of his beloved wife. The deceased was suffering from consumption and breathed her last at Calcutta on the 22nd April last."

The Indian Messenger thus noticed her death:—

"Hers was a glorious death. From the day it became apparent that she could not live and the last symptoms of her disease began to manifest themselves, her eyes turned to the next world, and her one request to all old and young, who approached her sick bed, was to pray for her. Every time she feared her end was approaching, she called her husband to her side and asked him to say his final prayers and bid her farewell with his final blessings."

The deceased was blessed that she had the unique privilege of associating by ties of matrimony with the Dev Atma who even during the very short period of three years and a half revolutionised her outlook on life and elevated the course of her career on this earth. She realised the one most precious truth that the supreme aim of man's existence is to get knowledge of self, get freedom from lower life and develop, in fact, those noble forces which make life rich, broad and productive of blessings for all around.

When Bhagwan Dev Atma lost his second wife, Mishra Udhoo Ram who had attended a number of his sermons and lectures and developed a feeling of true reverence for Bhagwan, requested him to accept the hand of his well-educated and cultured niece who was aged eighteen, since he felt, that this close relationship would be a source of the uplift of their whole family spiritually. Bhagwan Dev Atma took some time to consider over the proposal and after mature reflection, he decided to accept the offer. We feel grateful that Bhagwan came to this momentous decision. Bhagwan married on the 23rd October, 1885, when he was nearly thirty-five years of age, with Shrimati Devki Devi.

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA'S SERVICES TO SHRIMATI DEVKI DEVI.

Bhagwan Dev Atma lived the longest period of his life with Shrimati Devki Devi who is happily living amongst us to this day and elevating us by her wonderful life.* She was simply a girl of eighteen years

*She was alive when the above lines were written. She passed away on the 90th Birthday of Bhagwan Dev Atma,

when she entered into holy wedlock with Bhagwan. She lived with him for more than forty years. Bhagwan ministered to her body, intellect and soul with such a care and consideration, forethought and concern as not only brought about all-sided development of her precious being, but made her an example for all his followers and admirers which is most uplifting. Bhagwan Dev Atma treated her in fact as his companion. He made her a sharer in the pilgrimage of his life. Whenever Bhagwan went for a walk, and as a rule he went every day, he took respected *Pujniiji* with him. Whenever Bhagwan went out of station, he took revered *Pujniiji* with him. Almost invariably Bhagwan and revered *Pujniiji* dined at the same table. If revered *Pujniiji* fell ill, Bhagwan left no stone unturned to see that she was soon restored to her health. He took such a special care of her health that she looked a picture of health even when she had crossed the wrong side of fifty. Bhagwan loved neatness to a wonderful degree, and revered *Pujniiji* developed that trait to a remarkable extent. It was a joy to enter Bhagwan's residential quarters as they gave one an impression of divine *aura* of cleanliness and order. In everything—in dress, in person, in home arrangement, in all that pertains to life—one could witness the influence of that developed feeling of love for order and neatness in her. Besides this Bhagwan would convey to her anything striking or informing which he had read in books or journals. He devoted some time to reading books on various subjects or studying new facts almost every day. Bhagwan was intensely anxious to illumine her mind on various topics of the day. In fact he tried to share all his knowledge with her and thus not only developed her mind but made her life very interesting and entertaining to her.

Bhagwan yearned to remove all soul-darkness and impart soul-knowledge. He endeavoured in every way to convey these blessings to *Pujniiji*. Bhagwan yearned to liberate mankind from slavery of low-loves and low-hates. He struggled hard to make *Pujniiji* a partaker of these blessings. Bhagwan yearned to develop altruistic and higher character forces in souls. He made great efforts for evolving the noble side of *Pujni's* life, besides ministering to her physical health and intellectual progress.

What a wonderful woman Bhagwan developed out of the girl who had the privilege of becoming his partner in life, can be evident from a short resume of the noble traits which evolved in her under Bhagwan's most elevating influences:—

1. She developed that remarkable feeling of true reverence for her husband which led her, besides loving him as her husband, to worship him as a worshipful being. Thus this close relation and familiarity deepened rather than injured her reverential attitude. How rare it is to find such an attitude in wives !

2. She never spared herself in serving Bhagwan even though she had to attend to manifold duties. During Bhagwan's most serious and critical times of ill-health, she was always with him like a



MATA PUJNIYA SHRIMATI DEVKI DEVI JI AGNIHOTRI
Bhagwan's Third Wife.

true soldier, loyal to her duties and caring little what risk such performance might entail upon her. Not only she did not shrink from any sacrifice but whatever services she did, she performed with great devotion and love. In one of the addresses presented to her by lady members of the Dev Samaj, they spoke of this noble trait in *Mata Pujniaji* in the following words:—

“We feel deeply grateful to you for the whole-hearted, loyal and unsparing services which you do in relation to Bhagwan, specially during his serious illnesses and the greatest example you have set before us to follow that is of being a true *Dharm Patni*.”

3. She also imbibed from Bhagwan Dev Atma that rare feeling towards children which is, on the one hand, free from all undue attachments to them, and, on the other, mainly devoted to their good without the least distinction of their being male or female. It was this higher feeling which stood by her when all her own three children, one after the other, left her roof and turned out to be their unique father's persecutors. Had she been attached to them by *Moha* (bondage of low-love), she would not have been able to see the wrong side of life in her children and to feel a sort of pain and repulsion for it, and she could not have remained so very loyal to her husband. It is the greatest trial for a mother to agree to part with her children when they assume a hostile attitude towards their father, rather than leave her post of duty by her husband's side.

When Bhagwan passed away and his blessed body was lying in the Devalaya for the last most sacred rites, her two sons, helped by two Mahomedans made a forcible trespass into the compound to take possession of the house. The disciples of Bhagwan resisted these trespassers with the result that they had to leave the premises. At that time one of her sons said that he had come to see his widowed mother and he would even forcibly see her unless she herself refused to do so. A message was brought to her that her son was anxious to see her. She point blank refused to see him as he was an opponent of her most worshipful husband. Six more years have since passed and she has never encouraged them in their wrong ways. On the contrary, she has maintained the same, nay, stronger attitude of keeping them at an arm's length. Her deepest pain is that children begotten of her should have proved a source of persecution and suffering to their most worshipful father.

Both of her sons filed a suit against the property of Bhagwan. This deeply pained *Mata Pujniaji*. But she proved not in letter but in the very spirit loyal to the cause of her most illustrious husband. One of her sons died about three years ago. She did go to see that last services were done to the dead.

4. Throughout her life she has cherished feeling of love for her step-sons which is an altogether rare sight. Her behaviour towards her own children and step-children was never characterised

by any the least distinction. If she saw that her step-sons were better than her own children, she made no secret of her regard for them. If she saw that in any quarrel her own sons were more to blame than her step-sons, she sided with her step-sons. This most wonderful state of her heart has made her step-sons look upon her as their real mother.

If *Mata Pujniaji* had developed only this trait, even then she would have stood for womankind as a splendid example to follow.

5. Her own sons were not married. But her two step-sons did marry. Her attitude towards her daughters-in-law is a most elevating example. She has always wished them well and expected no selfish return. She has shared their sorrows and found joy in their weal. She has ever tried for their moral betterment. She is proving the greatest refuge and protection for the widowed wife of her eldest step-son and has helped her even with a large sum of money. One of her daughters-in-law once expressed her feelings in her relation in the following words:—

“My revered and worshipful mother! you wish me well even when you have suffered in various ways at my hands. I offer most humble obeisance to you. I remember you very much. I remember specially how devotedly you served me during my last illness. Where would I have been if I had not come under the shelter of Bhagwan Dev Atma. I would have lived that life which is the lot of several of my school and playmates. I feel extremely blessed that I am at your feet.”

6. Her feelings towards servants were not less splendid. She had been over-kind to them. She would give them clothes, food and money as gifts over and above their pay. She had as a rule been very kind and considerate in her treatment of them. When they fell ill, she would show real and practical sympathy for them. She had been reading to them portions out of good newspapers or good books for their benefit. When they fell ill she joyfully took upon her own head the duties usually assigned to them.

7. Her attitude towards those living under the protection of Bhagwan has all along been also one of a glorious kind. For several years she had been cooking for one or the other worker of the Dev Samaj and on certain occasions even washing their utensils. Towards women and girls, she devotes special attention. She sees that their needs are satisfied. She tries to liberate them from any evil or lower course of life and helps them in their noble traits.

Shrimati Kumari Prembalaji was brought up under the roof of Bhagwan. She is the daughter and only child of late Swami Gobind Ram, a distinguished worker of the Dev Samaj. In one of her letters she expresses her feelings in relation to *Mata Pujniaji*

as under :—

“Beloved mother, when I bring before my mental eye, the picture of your great favours and real good that you did to me, my heart bows down at your feet in all humility and I feel deeply grateful to you. It is indeed most difficult for me to narrate all the favours done to me from my infancy up to now. You have brought me up with greater love and care than could have been bestowed upon me even by my own real mother”

This lady is now passed middle age. She has remained a virgin all her life and is contributing her services to the betterment of her sex.

8. *Mata Pujniaji* has mothered not only those who sought her protection or lived in her family as members, but also such workers or members of the Dev Samaj who have lived at the feet of Bhagwan. She has not only done practical service for their physical welfare and removal of their mental worries, but has helped them in their struggles to become higher and nobler servants of society.

9. She has been an unfailing bulwark of comfort and help to all the women of Dev Samaj who unhesitatingly go to her and seek her society and counsel in their physical and spiritual struggles. As Bhagwan Dev Atma's wife, she has proved the greatest friend to all ladies struggling for Bhagwan's *Dev Joti* and *Dev Tej*. One lady writes to her :—

“I have felt that you have far more tender heart than my real mother's. You have listened to my troubles, realised them and removed them in a way as even my own mother could not have done.”

10. Her love for children was of an extraordinary kind. She took children of others in her lap, loved them, fondled them, gave them sweets or fruits or other things and thus bestowed her overflowing motherly love on them.

11. Her mercy for the helpless and suffering souls was wonderful. She had helped many a poor soul with money and clothes. When any death took place in any family of the Samaj, her sympathetic heart felt powerfully drawn to the bereaved family and by word of mouth or letter she carried consolation to the members.

One day *Mata Pujniaji* saw a girl in distress. She asked her what troubled her. Somebody said she was poor and had lost a four-anna piece. This had made her sad. *Mata Pujniaji* silently placed a four-anna piece in her hand. This scene however small won that soul to her and the girl expressed this in very grateful terms.

12. Her simple unostentatious life, her calm forbearance, her love for higher *sangat*, her feelings of personal devotion, her charities, etc., endeared her to the whole Samaj.

She used to be the first to attend meetings held for soul-evolution. She went about to collect funds for the cause of Bhagwan. She taught those who sought her help. She performed her *sadhans* regularly.

In her engagements she observed punctuality which we rarely find in the lives even of the greatest living or dead politicians and social or religious leaders in India.

She was ever ready to come forward in any scheme for the promotion of the cause of Bhagwan.

All this wonderful change which made *Mata Pujniaji's*, life a great inspiration to others and truly worthy of imitation, was wrought in her by Bhagwan Dev Atma. One rarely comes across a mother who measures her children at their worth; considers their shortcomings, their sins against father and others as sins and their limitations as limitations. One rarely meets a woman who bases all her relations on pure loyalty to and love for her husband, who is prepared to part with her own begotten children and stick to her husband when the children are in the wrong. One feels elevated to find a mother's heart which finds no distinction between real and step-sons and in their quarrels sides with truth, and whose vision is clear enough to see real virtues in a step-son and defects in her own. One cannot but deeply venerate that heart which takes children of others and brings them up like one's own; which recognises servants as human beings entitled to considerate care and respect, which would be willing not only to cook but even wash the utensils of those who work in a noble cause, though they are hardly entitled to receive such service. One is not only safe with such a mother, but is sure to grow into a nobler type if reverentially associated with her.

BHAGWAN'S TEACHINGS IN THIS RELATION.

Bhagwan has laid down both positive and negative commandments for husbands as well as for wives, which his followers are enabled to realise in their lives to the extent they get his *Dev Prabhavs*, and thus make this relation a great boon. A short summary of the positive commandments for husbands is as under:—

1. Every husband ought to realise the relation of *life-long affectionate companionship* with his wife and the need for liberating himself from every harmful course of life and evolving every good-producing feeling in that relation.

2. Every husband ought to *show respect to his wife* in his daily life, attend to her proper requirements tenderly, *respect her relations* and mention her with genuine regard even after she has passed away.

3. Every husband ought to develop the *feeling of love* for his wife by participating with her in innocent games, walks and other right activities, by having heart to heart talk with her, by living with her as far as possible, by deeply thinking over her virtues and by all other legitimate ways.

4. Every husband ought ordinarily to bear all the proper expenses for the maintenance of his wife.

5. Every husband *ought to consult his wife in domestic and other matters*, to stand by her devotedly in all her difficulties and troubles, to encourage her in all her right activities and to protect her from all wrong and sinful courses of life, to *help her in mental and soul-evolution* and to attend to and nurse her properly during her physical maladies.

6. Every husband *ought to purify his relation with his wife* by fully making amends for any sinful, wrong or harmful thought or act of his life in her relation.

7. Every husband ought to remember his wife daily and offer good wishes for her.

The summary of negative injunctions for husbands is as under:—

A husband ought (a) not to show any indifference in expressing respect to his wife and her relations during her life-time or even after her death; (b) not to hate her because of her heredity or any personal shortcoming; (c) not to make her miserable for any difference of religious beliefs or opinions; (d) not to interfere with her personal privileges; (e) not to corrupt his relation with her by adultery or sexual abuse; (f) not to pick up avoidable quarrels with her; (g) not to believe any accusation brought by his wife against his parents, brothers, sisters, etc., or brought by them against her without very calmly and impartially looking into and finding out the truth about it and ought not to cut off his relation with any of them on that score; (h) not to live outside his home without any legitimate cause; (i) not to intentionally refuse to admit his own sins or shortcomings towards her; (j) not to enjoy conjugal rights with her when he ought not to do so; (k) not to reveal any secret of his wife; (l) not to utilise her personal moneys, jewelry or other *stridhan* for his own purposes without her previous consent; (m) not to forsake his wife for any sin committed by her; (n) not to associate with any person whose company harms his relation with his wife; (o) not to make mention of his wife's defects before others without any imperative necessity; (p) not to keep any matter concealed from his wife without any reasonable cause.

All these injunctions, when observed, bring about that sweetness and loyalty in this relation which only they can know who have realised it.

WHAT WIVES OUGHT TO DO?

The positive commandments for wives when summarised come to these:—

Every wife ought to :

(1) feel her true affectionate *relation of life-long companionship* with her husband and realise the need of getting freedom from all the harmful conducts of life and evolving all the higher or good-producing feelings in his relation.

(2) feel and *show genuine respect* in relation to her husband in her every-day life, listen attentively to all the right matters which he or his relations tell her and maintain the same respectful attitude of heart towards his memory even after his death.

(3) make herself lovable to her husband in all ways, perform her duties towards him and his parents and other elders with scrupulous care; join him at table, in play, in walk and in similar other innocent things in order to deepen her affection for him, open her heart fully and sincerely to him and maintain a cheerful and smiling face, and every now and then ponder over his virtues, and thereby develop good feelings in his relation.

(4) keep her house tidy and clean, as well furnished as the social status and position of her husband's family demand keep all things of the house in order, perform all the domestic duties according to a settled programme and in time, keep store of the necessary things properly equipped; manage or personally perform domestic duties to the full satisfaction of her husband; make her life as serviceable and beneficial to him as possible; etc., etc.

(5) give proper counsel to her husband in the domestic and other concerns; stand by him in the hour of trouble and carry consolation to his heart; if possible help him in his profession; *co-operate with him in his right plans of life*; protect him, according to her capacity and position, from all wrong, sinful or evil conduct of life; help him in his studies or learning and in the evolution of noble life in him; attend to and nurse him and his parents, brothers, etc., when they fall ill.

(6) *make full and adequate amends for any wrong*, sinful or harmful act in her husband's relation of which she becomes conscious.

(7) Offer good wishes for his welfare.

NEGATIVE INJUNCTIONS.

A wife ought not to show indifference towards her husband, his parents and their dependents when they fall ill, or to do anything disrespectful in their relation; not to hate him for his lower caste, any temperamental defect, etc.; not to inflict pain on him because of any difference with him in beliefs or opinions; not to interfere with or obtrude upon his privileges; not to corrupt the sacredness of the wedded tie by sexual impurities, crimes or sins; not to create any unpleasantness in the family; not to harm anything by her low feelings; not to live outside her home without any proper cause especially when her husband is in the house or has come from outstation; not to deliberately refuse to acknowledge her faults of which she becomes conscious; not to demand anything at a wrong time; not to reveal his secrets to any one; not to give away any big or small thing of the house to any person without her husband's consent or knowledge; not to keep any connection with any person whose association is liable to harm her relation with her husband; not to disclose, without legitimate reason, her husband's defects to any body; not to keep anything secret from her husband except on any reasonable ground.

Bhagwan Dev Atma not only imparts these teachings but imparts his unique power to fit souls with the result that several couples have made their domestic life an object of extreme wonder and emulation to others.

V.

BHAGWAN AS A FATHER.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

None to our knowledge has been so much misunderstood and misrepresented to the world as Bhagwan Dev Atma. It was but natural, as the world had to judge Bhagwan according to its own motives of actions. The world has experience either of fathers who become unduly attached to their children and therefore become their bond slaves, ready to do anything good, bad or indifferent for their sake and to dedicate all their earnings at their feet; or of fathers who, in case they marry a second time, prove hard-hearted fathers towards their children from the first wife. As in all other relations so in this too, the motives of Bhagwan were his highest forces of the love of truth and love of goodness. Hence he loved the highest good of his children and was very tender towards them, but at the same time he could never sacrifice the highest principles of his life and had therefore to be stern where the conduct of his children offended against those principles. This was a new experience for mankind.

For many long years our theistic opponents circulated these atrocious lies, with vehemence and zeal worthy of a higher cause, that Bhagwan Dev Atma had, by founding the Dev Samaj, established a *gaddi* and created an estate for his children. When one of the children of Bhagwan, who at that time took very active part in promoting the cause of his unique father, was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Dev Samaj Council, our friends found a golden opportunity for misleading the public. But Bhagwan Dev Atma who was ruled only by his highest divine forces, could be influenced by no other consideration save that of loyalty to truth and goodness. Hence a time soon came when Bhagwan finding this same son not suited for that post, removed him from it. Bhagwan did not mind what the world said before that event or after it. His only concern was as to whether the action that he took harmonised with truth and goodness or not.

When a series of events took place which exploded the false impression, which our friends had ingeniously invented and propagated that Bhagwan had meant his society and its property or his own property for his children, they felt bewildered. Instead of humbly studying the facts and life of Bhagwan, they invented another lie, that Bhagwan did not possess even that much affection for his children which is necessary in a normal father, and therefore he was an unnatural father. While circulating this fib, they had to face one stern fact which puzzled them much. The children, whom Bhagwan had to expel from his society or even from his home or who left his home, were the children of his living wife, while the sons of his late wife,

enjoyed his affection and esteem. In the world it is the children of the late wife who suffer at the hands of the father. But here Bhagwan had to part with the children of the living wife and keep those of the first wife with him. In this drastic step the mother of the expelled children sided with Bhagwan. The fiction of step-sons being the victims, was thus out of question. Why did Bhagwan Dev Atma part with the children of his living wife? This rare phenomenon deserves to be studied dispassionately. But the enemies of Bhagwan wanted to strike hard and for that purpose any stick was good enough for them. They therefore called Bhagwan cruel.

This new impression was being created and deepened both in the press and on the platform when an incident happened which they pounced upon with a hungry heart, though this very incident was of their own creation. Some Arya Samajists and Sanatanists took hold of the eldest son of Bhagwan's living wife who possessed a defective leg and arm and induced him to file a suit against Bhagwan for maintenance, when he was aged 37, on the ground that he was congenitally incapable of earning his livelihood. It is true he was born as healthy as any human child, but he had an attack of infantile paralysis which left him with some defect in one of his arms and legs. But Bhagwan Dev Atma had given him sufficient education and training. From the time he attained maturity, he was enabled to stand on his own legs and he *worked as a clerk, a tutor, a writer, a journalist, etc.* He was unmarried all along. Hence he had only himself to support. Not only did he maintain himself but he had savings. He had made a will for the disposal of his savings after death. All these facts were heralded one after another in court and were admitted by him. His photo as a clerk in the Dev Samaj office was produced in the court where he looked a very decent gentleman. But inspired by our God-loving friends in the Arya Samaj and Sanatanist fold, this self same son put on a guise to give him an outward look of utter helplessness in order to excite the feeling of sympathy in the court. His plea, that he was expelled by his father because of his belief in God, was proved false to the hilt by his own long letters, and yet it was harped upon to create an impression that he was a victim.

In spite of the array of these most crushing facts, the City Magistrate gave the most perverse judgment opposed to facts, law and justice (which on its very face looked unworthy of being treated as a judgment) by which he decreed against Bhagwan a sum of Rs. 25 per mensem for maintenance of a child of thirty-seven !!

Bhagwan felt deeply hurt by this stupid judgment and appealed against it. It is not that Bhagwan could not afford this amount. But Bhagwan believed that all that he was possessed of, was a trust for the promotion of his highest mission for the good of mankind and he himself was a trustee, and hence he would be failing in his duty to his mission and to his trust if he acquiesced in this unfair charge of maintenance of a son, who was quite capable of looking after himself.

This appeal was accepted both by the Sessions Judge and the High Court and the perverse decree of the City Magistrate was set aside.

This loyalty to his life-principles gave a handle into the hands of our theistic friends to malign Bhagwan as hard-hearted. After they were major Bhagwan treated his children, as any other human being and not as gods at whose feet everything was to be dedicated. One day when we were at the feet of Bhagwan he pointed out to us a quotation in a daily paper in which an American had said, "Inheritance is a theft." Bhagwan smiled and said, "The world is getting conscious of the fact that dedication of all properties to children who can maintain themselves, is a theft on the world." Bhagwan taught that it is the foremost duty of parents to look after their children whom they have brought into the world, so long as they are not able to look after themselves, and to educate them according to their means, so that they may be able to stand on their own legs. Beyond that, Bhagwan taught, it is wrong to consider all the savings of a father as exclusively the property of the children. Hence Bhagwan left nothing for any of his children.

The matters reached a climax when his eldest son, late Shriman Pt. H. N. Agnihotri died and Bhagwan Dev Atma vehemently discouraged all attempts to raise subscriptions for the support of his widow and children. His too keen a sense of self-respect felt outraged that any member of his family or society should accept charity when he or she is able to maintain himself or herself and when one has some money to fall back upon. The late Pandit left a widow who is a trained teachress. She at once took up service and is since then decently maintaining herself and her children.

Not being able to comprehend that wonderful sense which showed Bhagwan the horror of mendicancy or spirit of accepting charity, not only his enemies but even several of his admirers traduced Bhagwan as unnatural father. When Bhagwan passed away, and his will, duly executed by him, was opened and read according to his instructions, on the occasion of his last ceremonies, it contained no legacy to any of his children or widowed daughter-in-law, because Bhagwan rightly believed that all that he was possessed of was the property of his mission intended for public good and not meant for any specific person.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's drama of life can be comprehended only when viewed in his unique light, as that light alone can reveal the nature of the highest divine forces that Bhagwan had evolved in his being. Unless we see and realize the superb motives of conduct of Bhagwan, it is impossible for us to understand him by our own motives of conduct which are low-loves and low-hates. The world has either renounced children as so many fetters or chains or worshipped them as gods. Bhagwan neither renounced his personibilities towards them, nor considered them as the gods of his

heart. His love for truth and goodness made it impossible for him to love any person as such. *Manush Prem* which is the outcome of undue attachment and has its consequent woes, could never rule Bhagwan. "Every child is a genius for his parents" was incomprehensible to the highest nature of Bhagwan, though experiences of the world compelled him to accept the existence of this fact. Bhagwan's position that child is merely a human soul as other human souls are, and not entitled to devotion and worship by the parents merely on the score of his or her being a son or a daughter of theirs, was and is foreign to world's mind. As Bhagwan felt impelled to love the highest good of all souls, he loved to do good to his children also but not to pander to their evil life as that was tantamount to doing evil to them.

His children had the proudest privilege of having had his personal and closest attention for their highest good. Our readers will be able to form their correct opinion from the facts given further on as to how Bhagwan did his utmost to keep them with him, to minister to their bodily and soul needs and to bless them with the most valuable treasures he had discovered. But when these children under the influence of low-loves and hates showed, by deliberately repeated wrong acts towards him and his mission, that they were determined not to profit by his higher love but to react antagonistically, he had as a last and inevitable resort, to part with them.

We believe that low-loves have enslaved parents to their children and have thus made them in fact the worst enemies of their real good. These low-loves degrade the life of parents and make them unfit to better the inner lives or, in most cases, even bodies of their children. It is not a sign of love to pander to all the wishes of the children, good or bad. That makes them utterly selfish and low. It is this lamentable psychology of man which is responsible for tragedies in every-day life of parents and children.

We give some details to remove the cloud of misunderstanding created by our friends in the theistic camps and thus to help our readers to profit by the ideal of life, placed before us, by Bhagwan.

THE STORY OF BHAGWAN'S YOUNGEST SON.

Of the three children of Bhagwan Dev Atma from *Pujnia* Shrimati Devki Deviji, only one is alive now. His name is Pandit Parphul Dev. This son had taken most active part in helping his elder brother, late Pandit Devanand in his suit against Bhagwan for maintenance. At one time during the suit, he showed a chapter of conduct as painful as it was unfilial to the extreme. Bhagwan was ailing. He was incapable of attending the court. A European doctor who was a retired Civil Surgeon, certified that Bhagwan was quite unfit to bear the strain of going to court and giving evidence. And yet an application was put in the court without so much as consulting even the complainant as was admitted by Pt. Devanand

in his cross-examination that he, the complainant, was anxious to get Bhagwan examined by his own doctors. These so-called doctors were quite fresh from the College having very little experience, but they had heart sufficiently hardened to harm Bhagwan. One of these doctors appeared as witness in court, unsummoned through court and without diet allowance, to help the applicant. He was again an Arya Samajist. Hence what the opinion of such friends of the complainant would be was certain. All these facts were placed before the City Magistrate. But in spite of this, he admitted their application. The court was then appealed to that if it wished to satisfy itself, it may send the highest medical authority (*i. e.*, Civil Surgeon), a European, to examine Bhagwan at our expense. But even this reasonable request failed to appeal to the Magistrate. This shows how Bhagwan fared at the hands of this City Magistrate. Pt. Parphul Dev was happy that he had won. His heart conjured up rosy and florid dreams of rushing in haste to his father's presence along with his willing tools, and bursting before him the shining aspect of his glorious filial love and making his most glorious father feel, how he, his son, had not only succeeded in encroaching upon his privacy but in dragging his ailing person before the court. But he had in his erroneous judgment counted without a host. As Pandit Praphul Dev was not a party to the suit, he was enjoined not to enter the premises of Bhagwan's house. But this was not enough to frustrate the evil designs of those concerned. Both the retired and the working Civil Surgeons—both Europeans—were called by Bhagwan to come and examine him and make a report to the court. This sight of the entry of two highest medical authorities served to blow up the unholy designs of Pt. Praphul Dev and his young doctor friends. These young doctors, as was already a foregone conclusion, certified that Bhagwan was quite fit to move to the court and give evidence. The European doctors, however, most unequivocally certified that Bhagwan was quite unfit to attend the court and give evidence.

Pandit Praphul Dev ran with his theistic doctors to place before the court a certificate of their opinion. But the court, however unreasonable in previous orders, could not reject the considered opinion of the Civil Surgeon of Lahore and hence this infamous move was foiled. One may naturally ask why Pt. Praphul Dev behaved in such an unfilial way? Answer to this will be found in the facts which are given below:—

Firstly, unfortunately Pt. Praphul Dev developed from his boyhood low-love of arrogance which unfitted him to live in the higher atmosphere of his father's family or society. On account of the sway of this low-love, he saw evil in those who were his benefactors simply because they would try to reclaim him from his wrongs.

It was in the beginning of the year 1908 that for the first time he fled from his father's house because his very kind, tender and loving mother rebuked him for a fault. But though he fled, he had not

grown hopeless then. He could receive the unique light of his unique father and could view his conduct in that light in the true perspective. Hence in his letter dated the 21st January, 1908, he wrote to his father:—

“ With heart full of repentance and shame, I present myself in your august presence. It is difficult to adequately measure the pain I have inflicted on your heart, the disgrace that I have incurred, and the degraded being that I have proved myself to be. Oh! you give protection to the unprotected; you listen to the prayers even of the most ungrateful beings; you are a blessed one more so as you are prepared to once again give me shelter in spite of my having done you so much harm and to do good to me without any the least selfish object *How degraded am I that I see evil in those who wish nothing but good to me.* Can a man, who has fallen so low, expect true freedom? May my eyes open, so that I may be able to see my own good and evil, and discriminate between them, and by walking the path of goodness I may be able to fulfil your and mother’s highest expectations and gain your blessings.”

This was his attitude when sense came to him.

Secondly, Bhagwan Dev Atma himself was a phenomenal worker. He literally worshipped work. His followers too have been awakened according to their capacities to the sublime beauty of work—useful and constructive work. Bhagwan penalised sloth or do-nothing life. He was therefore naturally very anxious that his sons should develop that trait, as industry in the long run yields better results than mere ability. But Pandit Praphul Dev by his life proved himself an ease-loving young man. He did not put his heart into his studies. He could not pass his Matriculation examination even in two years that he was in the tenth class. As he would not study, it was deemed desirable to put him in some trade and he was placed as an apprentice at his brother’s shop. But here too he would not feel any interest in the useful work. Bhagwan was apprised of this. He then wrote to him a letter a portion whereof we translate and quote here:—

“ So far as your studies are concerned you wasted your time during your school days. Most of the money spent on your education was thus wasted. You remained for two years in the tenth class and yet you failed to pass Matric, because you did not love education. As for higher life you have so far shown no anxiety to develop it in you. Even in order to succeed in the world you should have some strong motive force. This also you do not possess. It is not known what shall be the end of all this in your life

“ Your youth is dawning. This period is the most critical for one having no higher life. This is the time when a man fascinated by the happiness-producing objects strays away from the path of his true welfare and thus ruins his life

"A boy while stepping into the period of his budding youth should expect his advancement only if :—

(a) he has deep reverence for his benefactors and well-wishers *i.e.* when he realises them as his real well-wishers ;

(b) he has real desire to follow the lead of such of his benefactors who possess greater knowledge and better experience than him and who keep the good of his life before them in giving him any advice. He does not let his lower nature interfere with his accepting their guidance and feels himself lucky in being able to follow their advice

"Do you at this critical age accept us as your guide? If not you can yourself realise the most harmful consequences of this wrong step"

As Pt. Praphul Dev could neither study nor work in the shop, it was proposed to send him to Quetta and get him employed in some Government department. Before being sent there Bhagwan called him to Solon to help him spiritually. But as he had suffered through evil company, he tried to avoid Bhagwan. The result was that without so much as giving any intimation to his great father and without paying any regard to the fact that his father was then lying ill, he surreptitiously fled from there. He himself describes the incident in one of his letters as under :—

"It began to revolve in my mind that man should be able to stand on his own legs At last, as a result of this brooding, I requested permission through mother to leave Solon with *Chhote Kartaji* (*i.e.* ; his elder brother). But you did not grant permission. *Before you refused permission to me to leave, I had several times packed my kit and made preparations to leave. The only thought that dissuaded me was that if your illness became serious, it would be very shameful for me to leave you in such a condition But the feeling of self-help (?) was strong in me and at last I determined to run away stealthily"*

But what was Bhagwan's treatment towards him? He forgave him again and sent him to *Quetta*. Yet his soul maladies made him lose interest even in that place and he again came back to Lahore.

He then expressed a desire that he would study. Bhagwan again gave him a chance for that. He was sent to *Moga* for this purpose, but he could not stay there long. He returned to Lahore saying that he would study privately. Even this he was permitted to do. But easy-going life coupled with self-will incapacitated him from that also.

Thirdly, his repulsion for his well-wishers and fascination for evil company drew him towards a man who should have been the last one in the world with whom he should have associated. This man was none other than Mahashe Dharampal who was, in those days, trying his utmost to carry out his virulent propaganda against Bhagwan and the Dev Samaj at the instigation of Arya Samaj leaders. His self-will made it irksome for him to submit to family discipline. At last in the month of July 1909, he fled for the third

time and joined Dharampal. He had the degradation to join forces with that notorious enemy of his father in his venomous attacks.

Thus he betrayed the most repulsive trait of his heart, *i.e.*, vindictiveness or revenge.

But though this ruinous phase in the life of his own begotten child wounded the heart of Bhagwan too deeply to be described, he did not even in the face of such rank ingratitude abandon him. He tried still to save him. Bhagwan therefore wrote to Shri Bhai Amar Singh, his faithful apostle, to communicate his message to Pandit Praphul Dev that it was better for him to try to get some employment and if he was prepared to do so, he could be helped in getting some job. But he was then blind and did not accept the proffered hand. At last to his good fortune he got a chance to wriggle out of the noxious atmosphere of Bhagwan's enemies and got some employment in an out-station. Here in his sober moments, the continued good wishes of his unique father again touched his heart and his lamentable conduct appeared to him in its truly hideous form. He then wrote the following lines in his letter of the 12th January, 1910 to his most revered father :—

“With folded hands I again seek your forgiveness for the *vulgar words of disrespect* I had used in my letters to you I feel heartily grateful to you for all your kindness and favours and shall continue to do so in future.”

He was permitted to come and see his parents. He was again reconciled. Then he left India for his voyage beyond the seas to Hong-Kong. From that far distant place, he wrote the following letter in English to his father recounting the favours done to him :—

17th September, 1910.

“My dear and respected father! I feel greatly indebted to you for the pieces of advice you were so kind to send, and I may assure you that I shall try my best to act accordingly.

“*My negligence, my carelessness, my pride have brought me to this state.* To what other state they could take me? I was given parents—best well-wishers. I was given means for the prosecution of my studies in the best possible way. I was favoured with the opportunities, which could be of great use in the making of my future life. Lo! I was foolish enough to lose them all. I did not pay any heed to their necessity. I did not mind them at all. I took everything as a trifle. Really what a wretched man I am? How foolishly I have acted in depriving myself of such beneficial circumstances. Time passed, cannot be recalled. What is done is done. What is done cannot be undone. I have lost years of my life in carelessness and have to repent for them now Had I continued my studies rightly, I would have graduated by this time. Sometimes I am so absorbed in such like thoughts that my heart becomes filled with disappointment, and my mind overwhelmed with feelings of despair

"I implore your good wishes and *shubh kamnas* and am sure they will help me very much in my present situation."

This is how in calm moments he realised his position of wasted opportunities and lost years of life and could see the beauty of the favours of his parents whom he had troubled and persecuted so much.

In another letter he wrote :—

"29th October, 1910.

"My dear father!

"To confess the truth, dear father, I may say that I cared much for the secondary things I built castles in the air. I did not pay attention to your sound advices, while it was my duty to do so. I minded them not. To be your faithful and obedient son, ought to have been my motto, a thing worth acquiring. Your relation was primary (as I now realise quite distinctly and am certain that my heart is not cheating me in thinking like this) and every other secondary. I foolishly sacrificed primary object for the sake of the secondary one. What a grave mistake I have committed! What a folly—nay, mischief have I caused! Truly I am a great sinner."

This was what he felt when he was far off even from India. It is true he was a great sinner all along. But he was fortunate that he had the heart left to realise that wrong condition.

Proceeding further, he wrote :—

"Now I repent and wish to find the right path—however difficult it may be. I don't want to stick to the wrong principles any longer. I request you to lead me as you have ever been ready to do. I crave your forgiveness for all my faults and shortcomings. I no longer wish to keep any grudge against my elder brothers who many times have helped me with all their powers. You please lift me up. Don't hate me (Dev Atma never could hate anybody—Compiler). Never think of my past. Forgive and forget. First I intended to give up everything and to pass my remaining days at your sacred feet. May I end my life while serving you, is my earnest desire."

But alas! he passed the remaining years of his life in inflicting the sorest wounds on the heart of his great father.

In his letter of the 6th December 1910, he wrote :—

". . . I worship even the land you tread upon. *You are ideal father, an ideal 'Guru', an ideal friend, an ideal Master . . . the object of adoration.*"

Bhagwan Dev Atma was, is and shall always remain an ideal being. Only those who get perverted vision lose this discrimination and suffer hopelessly in their lives. He also wrote in the same letter :—

"I was really misguided. *Believe me that I had no personal opinion of my own. I was a mere tool* (and tool he remained in the hands of scheming men—Compiler). Rest assured that I have acquired enough of experience and in future there is no possibility of being again led to the path of destruction—an irreparable loss. If my tears can relieve you of your troubles, you have plenty of them. Upon my word, my heart is dictating these lines. Take them the way I feel."

Those theistic hearts who ceaselessly harp on the absolutely false calumny that the Dev Atma treated his sons harshly or turned them out merely because of difference of belief, are advised to read these lines. Pt. Parphul Dev wrote them from Hong-Kong. Hence the oft-repeated lie of theirs cannot help them that he was made to write under influence. Thrice this son had left the roof of his parents against their wishes and even joined or remained in company of notorious enemies of his father. But Bhagwan repeatedly forgave him and tried to help him on the basis of higher principles.

He returned from Hong-Kong. He received a welcome from his father which he had never anticipated. He caught a glimpse of the unbounded love of his father to do him good turn. Let the Pandit himself speak:—

"Ah! how blessed was the day of yesterday when, after a long separation I had once again the privilege of meeting and having *darshan* of you my father—my truest well-wisher and benefactor.

"I have no word to completely paint the scene of that moment when you embraced an insignificant person as I am. Was I worthy of this?

"Did my position entitle me to touch thy holy body? My own heart at least replies in the negative (yes, your heart gave a correct verdict—Compiler). This is due only to thy ocean-wide broad-mindedness or else what a comparison could there be of a low person (*Kangra Teli*) like me to thee, who art like King Bhoj! Thou art *Kirpa Nidhan* (gracious); thou art *Kirpalu* (kind); thou art *Dayalu* (merciful); thou art glorious. I am insignificant. Thou art everything for me, and I have individually no value. I am a lowly person."

He continues in his above letter in Hindi dated the 15th April, 1911:—

"Truly thou art the protector of those who take thy refuge. *Let a person be even thy bitterest enemy and inflict the deadliest wounds on thy heart, but as soon as he accepts thy refuge and presents himself before thee, thou at once forgettest all his acts of greatest injustice and devotest thy powers for his good and welfare. Exactly this is what has happened in my relation.* (Italics are ours).

"So far my memory can help me, I have, instead of making you happy, continuously inflicted nothing but pain on thee for a long time. But when I presented myself before thee yesterday, I was astonished to see the way I was received by you. Thou art blessed! Thou art blessed!!".

These were the lines written by this full-fledged mature young man, who had had the experience of foreign travels and pretty large experience of his own life about the continuous good turn he received for his evil acts, at the hands of his most glorious father.

He was without service when he returned from Hong-Kong. Bhagwan got him a job in one of the schools of Dev Samaj. He also began his private studies to appear for Matriculation. But his acquired disposition of a rolling stone again asserted itself. He wrote from there, that he could not rest content with a life of a teacher and that he was anxious to start some business in order to earn more money. He expressed his desire to learn photography. Bhagwan once more agreed to help him in his new line and promised to pay Rs. 15 a month to him, if he applied his heart and soul to learning that art. But he could not stick even to that new idea and left for Bombay where he got some service. After earning some money, he again returned to Lahore and opened a laundry shop. He came to see his parents now and then.

But his acquired wrong habits did not forsake him. Instead of proving a source of comfort and service to his parents, he tried to create domestic disaffection. He had, therefore, again to be ordered not to enter the house. This is how his relation ended for ever with his parents.

The question may be asked, why it was that in spite of the repeated favours lavished upon him, any amount of good opportunities placed before him, and sympathy and love shown to him, this young man could not resist the mode of life calculated to degrade and injure his own being, as well as to shock and wound Bhagwan? He saw his weakness, at one time or another, hated his evil tendencies, and yet fell an easy prey to them often and often, and at last tore himself away from his ideal father.

This will be clear if we understand a universal law of soul-life. It is inevitable that rival forces in the heart must come into conflict and the more powerful must prevail. Though Pandit Praphul Dev had got some seeds of good heart forces, yet the low forces of self-will and love of ease had acquired such a strong hold on him through the bad influences of the opponents of Bhagwan Dev Atma and specially of a Mohamedan companion, that in spite of all endeavours, he could not cast off their influence and hence succumbed to them in his soul-life.

The part that he played when Bhagwan departed from this earth, and his sacred body was as yet lying in "Devalaya" for the purposes of last rites, will not only never be forgotten by those who witnessed it, but would afford a chapter of study to the world of the

depth of degradation to which a son can fall. As soon as this son and his elder brother Pandit Devanand came to know, that Bhagwan had passed away, they made ready to criminally possess the house. Accompanied by two Mohamedan accomplices they scaled the walls and made a criminal trespass. They perhaps thought that their mother, who was in the house, would side with them. But as soon as they tried to force open a door, the *sewaks* of Bhagwan opposed this party. A free fight ensued and they were driven out. Cases and counter cases were filed. Both were dismissed. But the fact remained that these sons could not desist from desecrating by this unholy design the place which lay under the shadow of great mourning. How sad it is, to be ruled by low-loves and low-hates!

IN RELATION TO DAUGHTER.

Bhagwan had only one living daughter. She was born in 1895. She left the roof of Bhagwan at the age of twenty-three. Because she was a girl, Bhagwan treated her with more than ordinary care and affection. She matriculated in 1915. She served as a teachress for one full year. Whatever she earned she was permitted to keep with herself, while all her expenses of food, clothing, etc., were borne by Bhagwan. She then joined College. She sat for the Intermediate Arts examination, but she was detected with a history book while answering her question paper. She was, therefore, rusticated. Bhagwan's heart melted to see her in misery and he spent much time to carry consolation to her.

She lived in a very beautifully and tastefully furnished room in the "Devalaya" and was provided with everything needed for her comfort and studies. Even her slight bodily ailments were tenderly attended to and she was nursed by her mother even at the cost of her duties towards Bhagwan.

How this girl was treated by Bhagwan up to the age of twenty-three would be apparent from her own letters, a few of which we quote here. These letters show how wonderfully elevating were the environments in which she was brought up and how glorious is the light of Bhagwan which showed her the beauty of higher life at that early age. When studying in the Dev Samaj Girls' High School, Ferozepore, she wrote a letter to Bhagwan on her birthday on the 6th September, 1909, in which she said:—

"On this day (*i.e.*, her birthday) when I ponder over thy relation towards me, series of favours done to me by thee come before me. I find no adequate words to describe the tenderness with which thou hast brought me up, protected me, educated and served me. In bringing me up, thou hast not observed the invidious distinction observed in the care of female and male children. *As thou art my ideal father, so art thou my ideal Guru.* In all ways and in all relations, thy life is an ideal one. I feel myself abundantly blessed that I possess such a father If I realise this honour of

being thy daughter, I must on my part fulfil all thy higher expectations about me and thus afford thee satisfaction... What thou expectest of me is rarely expected of their children by ordinary parents It behoves me that being born in thy family, I should not only not lower its great name, but do all to prove myself worthy of it. I do not want to remain thy child only in name, but I want to prove a worthy daughter of thy family."

It is true, as admitted by her, that she was brought up like a son. We personally know that she received even far greater tenderness and care than is ordinarily shown towards sons.

On the 22nd June, 1912, when she was seventeen years of age, she wrote a letter to her most worshipful father in which she said :—

"Several times, the beauty of thy glorious life, and personal favours done to me by thee, come before me so vividly and so strikingly that I fail to find words to describe them correctly. Truly thou art blessed. How thy heart movest on seeing me ill, what a pain thou feelest and what endeavours doest thou make in seeing me out of it! I have seen how thou wouldst serve me at night, and attend to me several times during day to carry consolation to me. When I bring before me the picture of all these favours, my heart is softened and tears rush to my eyes. I remember thee very much It is sad that I do nothing in return for the favours that I receive at thy hands. On the one hand there is the picture of thy supreme favours and on the other is the picture of my selfish life."

Bhagwan Dev Atma had fully realised the value of body but only as an instrument of soul. Hence besides tending the bodies of his children, he ministered most to their soul-life. In her sane moments, this girl realised the glory of this kind of services done to her by her unique father. Hence in her letter, dated the 9th August, 1912, she wrote :—

"When I pondered over the fascinating picture of thy supreme favours to-day, a long series of such favours passed before my inner eye and moved my heart wonderfully. I felt that in the world thousands of parents serve their children in one or other way and thus favour them, but the nature of thy favours upon me is distinctly superior to the favours done by ordinary parents to their children. This is because thou art unique in thy own nature. Thou art continuously doing good to me even in face of the troubles I cause to thee. This picture of thy favours made my heart to bow in obeisance before thee"

On the 15th January, 1914, when she was about nineteen years of age, she wrote the following lines amongst others :—

"Dear father, in these days of *yagya* (period devoted to purification of the relation of parents and children) while I meditated over thy favours, I felt my very existence as a gift from thee and my mother. From the time I took birth, you both applied yourselves

to bringing me up and protecting me. You both had to pass through no end of troubles in nurturing me. While I have been a source of pain to thee because of the lack of higher senses in me, thou hast been ever ready to make all sacrifices for me. Nay, *at one or the other time thou hast sacrificed even thy own health for me.* Thou hast not only served me for days, months or one full year, but such favours have been done to me for a long period of nearly nineteen years Being born in thy family, I have received the most beneficent treatment. Even though several times thou wert short of money, yet fullest generosity was displayed in my relation by thee in the shape of providing for my food, clothing, education and other necessities At times, when I have fallen ill, thou hast not only done me personal service but spent large amounts of money, sent for the best doctors to attend to me and sat by my pillow, even when thou wert ill thyself, to carry comfort to my heart. All these favours are indescribable I pray that I may prove a filial daughter to thee, and make thy name and name of my family glorious in this world."

Little did she realise then, that the sprouting in her heart of the low-loves and low-hates would not only shut out her vision permanently from all these chapters of services done to her, but would also lead her to a path of life suicidal to her own being and make her a source of very great pain and disgrace to her parents and family.

She was twenty-one years of age, when she wrote the following letter :—

"During the last twenty-one years of my life, thou hast passed through great struggles and made large sacrifices for my welfare in various ways. During my illness, thou didst all for my health Even when thou wert thyself ill, thou wert gracious enough to overlook the interests of thy health and come and sit by me and try all possible ways to get me speedily cured.

"Besides this, thou art undertaking heavy expenses of my College education. While I was leaving for this place (*i.e.*, Feroze-shahr) thou wert pleased to come out, meet me, see me seated in tonga"

Thus Bhagwan personally did all that is ever expected of a good and loving father. He tried his best to save her from bad influences and place her in higher influences, so that low-loves and low-hates may not possess her heart and blast her life.

But it is sad that with the dawn of youth she avidly assimilated lower influences of her school and college girls and the poisonous influences of her own real brothers. The result was that unknown to Bhagwan, she developed such low-loves and low-hates which needed only a spark to burst into a flame and consume all that was good in her and thus leave her a charred soul, repelling the best, most elevating and low-loves-destroying highest divine influences of her father.

THE STORY OF HER FALL AND SEPARATION.

There was a time when Bhagwan had expected that she would devote her life to the higher service of his cause and sacrifice lower desires of marriage etc. for that goal. Hence it is desirable to quote here Bhagwan Dev Atma's own version of the change for the worse in her life. Bhagwan writes in his book *My Unique Sacrifices*, Part VII :—

“A time came in the life of my daughter when my most wicked and ungrateful son (Pandit Devanand—Compiler) succeeded in influencing her life for the worse, as he had succeeded in the case of his younger brother. This was that critical time, when low-loves began to sprout in her life and the company of her evil associates in the Girls High School at Lahore where she studied for Matriculation began to affect her. These two factors influenced her in such a way :—

“1. That she made up her mind to marry a man who was already married and had a living wife but whom he had deserted. This man seeing her free from a lot of superstitions and finding her an enlightened girl insidiously attracted her towards himself.

“2. That she tried her best to keep all this attraction for that married man concealed from me, as she knew positively and too well, that I considered such a marriage as most sinful. Nay, whenever, I tried to probe her mind on the question of marriage through her mother, she invariably said that she had no intention at all of entering into wedded life for two reasons; firstly because she was anxious to graduate and secondly because her health was too weak to enable her to enter wedlock. I took her to be a sincere girl and hence believed in what she said. She had unfortunately destroyed the virtue of sincerity in her character under evil influences and she did not want to be foiled in her determination by revealing to me her intentions. This led her to become a hypocrite and to deceive me. She thus committed breach of faith in my relation . . .

“3. That she desired to have as much money for her daily needs and education as she could possibly succeed by various ways in taking from me. She knew that quite definitely I meant to utilise not only all my powers but all my possessions mainly for the furtherance of my mission or life-vow, and that I was not prepared to leave any part or share of it for any of my children

“4. That she should dominate her mother and through her get as much more money as she could and keep that with her, and then wed that man when the law could permit her, and if possible, the wedded wife of that person should die.

“According to this programme, she devised various plans of action. One man at Lahore and one blood relation of that man aided and abetted both in their mean project.

“For a full year after she matriculated, she served as a teachress in a Lahore Girls' School and got fifty rupees a month. All her income she hoarded. Besides taking services from her mother in

various other ways, she also succeeded in taking from her several ornaments besides getting from me cash money. All this enabled her to have a decent saving. She continued, quite hidden from me, correspondence with the man whom she had determined to marry . .

"From the time that this girl had determined to marry this man who was already wedded and whose wedded wife was alive, and she had commenced to prove harmful to that man's relation with his wife—keeping all this drama concealed from her parents in whose relation she proved hypocrite and ungrateful—she began to tread the path of degradation which continued. The other evil that entered her life was fondness for fashion."

HOW SHE LEFT HER FATHER'S ROOF.

As has been said above, this girl had very unfortunately developed most wicked attachment for the man whom she could not openly marry, so long as his first wedded wife was alive. Therefore, she wished the death of that man's wife and waited for her death. The man did the same. Both, therefore, became blind and callous. Knowing that Bhagwan would not bear this horrible idea, they both hated Bhagwan. This hatred spoiled her relation with her father—her greatest benefactor and well-wisher and made her sullen, defiant and selfish.

Time came in her life when she felt at sea. So long as she was studying, she had at least an engagement. But she was detected with a book while doing her paper in her examination. She was rusticated from the University. She saw the ground giving way under her feet. Bhagwan Dev Atma tried to soothe her pain of heart. But she resolutely defied all his attempts to awaken her to see the nature of her action and the lesson it held for her. Bhagwan was ailing very much in those days and he had to leave for Solon shortly. Even during his weakness and diseased condition, he went often to her room or called her to him to take her out of the rut of her anxieties. But she would not respond. Even on the day Bhagwan was leaving for Solon and though he was ill and feeble, he remembered her and for a long time tried to carry consolation to her. This told on his health very badly. But mere rustication from University was not the only cause of her agony. There was some other hidden serpent which wormed itself into her heart and was wooing her to her fall.

Bhagwan left for Solon but she lived at Lahore. During this period she apparently formed an idea of joining Karve's University for Women at Poona.

But what pained Bhagwan was her increasing self-will or arrogant defiance. Hence when once they met, he opened his mind to her that if she did not any longer want to remain under his direct protection, he would not work as her guardian and that she was free to take up the reins of her life in her own hands. But as she was a girl, he would undertake to pay all her expenses of travelling with an escort to Poona and those of her College education

there. Till she left for Poona she was to be allowed all the privileges, open to her before. Bhagwan also suggested to her that she should inform the authorities at Poona of the fact of her rustication and solicit their help but she refused to do such a thing.

She expressed nothing, even when such a liberal and kindest offer of help was vouchsafed to her—not a single word of thanks even. This was because she had not the remotest idea of going to Poona. After four days, she sent a line written on slate to her father, that she was leaving for Poona that night. She however did not go to Poona, but went and stayed at Bombay, where the man resided with whom she intended to marry.

Her letters from Bombay written to a blood relation of the man (her intended husband) were seized, and duly delivered to Bhagwan along with the compromising correspondence which she had been carrying on with that man.

When Bhagwan came to know all about the doings of the guilty pair, his heart received the severest possible shock. We ourselves witnessed, how deeply he felt the wrong done to the deserted wife of that person. Even the father of that wronged wife would not have felt that whole-hearted sympathy which Bhagwan felt for her. He offered *Mangal Kamnas* for her welfare and many times during the day his best wishes were expressed for her. His attitude towards his own daughter was that of the most unbiased judge and he, therefore, adjudged her as she deserved. It did not matter at all with him that she was his daughter and the victim was another man's daughter. He regarded both as human beings equally entitled to his consideration.

The guilty pair came to know that their secret, hidden with extreme care, was out. She left Bombay, as Bhagwan on her request agreed again to give her another chance to save her soul, if she could to tread the path of better life.

Bhagwan confronted her with facts. She admitted in half-halting manner the chapter of her wrong deeds, and showed inclination to profit by Bhagwan's reformatory punishment. Bhagwan laid down the following four injunctions for her :—

1. That if possible, she should not marry and remain celibate. But if she liked to marry, she should marry a man whom she and Bhagwan both should consider desirable.
2. She should keep no connection whatsoever with that man, and should not by letters or otherwise convey to him her wishes and feelings, nor should she make any attempt to get any information about that man's feelings, etc.
3. She should ponder over her evil traits of self-will, selfishness, breach of faith and insincerity and as far as possible try to get freedom from them.
4. She should give up fashions, and put on neat, tidy but simple dresses like a true *Brahmcharni*.

Bhagwan teaches, that when a man is guilty of any wrong act towards another and does not feel any repulsion, adequate pain and a strong urge to make amends for it, he cannot get any true salvation or freedom from it. This girl showed none of these natural symptoms, and hence sank under the weight of her past sins.

She then expressed a desire to go to Baroda to join that College. A Sindhi gentleman, who had once been a *sewak* of Bhagwan was living there. He agreed to keep her in his own family. Bhagwan, out of deepest mercy to save her, undertook to defray her expenses, so long as she abided by the conditions specifically laid down for her by Bhagwan. She outwardly agreed to do so. She was given money to defray expenses of her journey and to start life there. She was helped till the time when it became clear to Bhagwan that she had not the remotest intention of abiding by the conditions laid down for her. She had come to know that her intended husband's wedded wife had at last succumbed. Now she felt the path open for her, and she was anxious to reap the harvest of her wrong endeavours and long waiting. Hence, she at last went to Bombay and married that man. She hardly lived three years or thereabout after that and passed away. Well could the ghost of the wronged wife have told her "woman! you stole my husband from me even when I was alive and Nature has parted you from him after the shortest possible span of wedded life."

From what has been given above, it is clear that Bhagwan Dev Atma went the longest way to serve and redeem her, forgave her often and often, and opened the gate of his favours to her several times; and so long as there was the slightest ray of hope for her to be saved, he forgot everything about her wrongs done towards him and unlocked the door of his favours to her. But when she assumed a condition or stage of life in which it became impossible to save her, Bhagwan had to give up his direct attempts for her welfare, though he even afterwards, remembered her in his daily good wishes.

What a great misfortune it is for any child to be born in the family of Bhagwan Dev Atma, and yet to sear his or her heart to such an extent as to become totally impervious to his unique higher influences, extraordinary kindness, and pure love for the highest good not only of his or her soul, but also of everything concerning him or her.

TEACHINGS OF BHAGWAN.

Following is the summary of the glorious injunctions which Bhagwan has left for his followers who are parents, to follow in relation to their children for their highest good :—

1. Parents (fathers and mothers) ought to realise that their children receive in heredity their physical and mental powers to smaller or larger extent, and that they should, therefore, develop their own body, and evolve their own souls in order to produce good progeny.

2. Parents should feel their relation with every child of theirs as an offspring of their being or in the case of step-child, as an issue of one of them. Realising this close relationship, they should feel the necessity of liberating themselves from all the harmful activities, and developing all the higher feelings in this relation

3. Parents should develop higher love for their children which is free from the poison of undue attachment or slavery to them.

4. Parents should bring up their daughters with equal affection and tenderness as sons. They should, according to their capacities, do their utmost in building the bodies of their children, protecting them from physical maladies and in case of their falling ill, do their best to see them cured. They should take care of their normally sound children ordinarily up to the age of their majority, and if any of their children is congenitally or otherwise physically and mentally unfitted to maintain himself or herself, they should, according to their means, provide for his or her needs for their whole life.

5. Parents should, according to the needs and capacities of their sons and daughters, give them education and training in various languages and sciences as far as their own circumstances permit. They should also give them training in physical culture, riding, manual exercise, etc., and impart to them any professional or business education according to their means and the requirement of their children.

6. Parents should give their children light about the nature, organism, evolution and dissolution, etc. of soul, and enlighten them as to what constitutes true religion, what are its chief attributes, and the true religious exercises, and also about Bhagwan Dev Atma, the one, true teacher of true religion.

7. Parents ought to make every effort to create and evolve higher repulsion in the hearts of their children against all lower courses of life and evolve in them higher and altruistic forces.

8. Parents ought to perform all the domestic rites of their children according to the reformed rites of the Dev Samaj.

9. Parents ought to contribute from their self earned wealth, and property, only as much amount as is proper for the essential needs of their children.

10. Parents ought to keep their children under discipline as far as possible by love and moral force, and even when it is expedient to punish a child for its reformation, it should only be done with due regard to the child's age and status and parents' own rights.

11. Parents getting conscious of having done any undue harm to any of the children, ought to make full amends for it, and thus purify their relation with them.

12. Parents able to do so should offer *Mangal Kamnas* (good wishes) for the welfare of each of their children.

NEGATIVE COMMANDMENTS.

Parents should abstain from (1) *begetting more children* than their means allow them to maintain properly; (2) *making any distinction* in the bringing up of daughters and sons or hating any of their children on any account; (3) *showing apathy* towards keeping their children under discipline, giving them education, developing noble life in them, eradicating their evil traits and attending to their just prayers; (4) doing *anything prejudicial to the health* of their children: (5) co-operating with children in their such wishes or prayers as are calculated to harm their body and injure their morals or education; (6) permitting their children to associate with those whose contact is calculated to affect their bodily health, education, morals, etc; prejudicially; (7) directly or indirectly imparting such teachings to their children as they believe to be untrue or sinful; (8) *inflicting corporal punishment*, as far as possible, on their children for their lapses, and *using violence* against them for any wrongs committed by them in their ignorance, except simply explaining to them the harmful nature of their wrong, and even in case when children deliberately do any wrong, inflicting punishment on them in excess of what is imperatively necessary.

By following these teachings, as is being done in more or less degree by capable parents in the Dev Samaj, most blessed results are bound to accrue so far as the harmony and love in homes is concerned. When parents come to realise, that all their property or wealth is not solely intended for their children but that man owes great many obligations to his society and humanity, and even to the lower kingdoms, and when children also feel, that it is undignified to possess what does not morally belong to them, one great cause of human misery in this relation will have disappeared. Children would not serve their parents with an eye on their wealth, nor maltreat or even kill them for that purpose. They would serve them as benefactors, and authors of their being and this kind of service would be really unadulterated and pure. Parents, too, would escape the slavery they ordinarily develop when they accept their sons as deities, at whose feet they have to dedicate their all.

CHAPTER VI.

BHAGWAN AS A DISCIPLE.

Bhagwan has left for us a marvellous example of what a disciple ought to be. We have already described briefly in the third part :—

1. How Bhagwan Dev Atma's inner nature sought its appropriate environment in the person of his future *Guru*, when he accidentally met him in a teacher's house on the occasion of Holi Festival. How he felt strongly attracted to this great and real *Rishi*, who had not deserted his relations and dependants and the just duties and responsibilities to them yet who was unattached to them and lived a very heaven-minded life ;

2. How Bhagwan himself proposed to this *Rishi*, that he should be initiated as a regular disciple along with his most loyal and loving consort ;

3. How he developed full faith in him and hence literally followed all his teachings as sacred commandments, and found it impossible even in his unconscious moments to neglect them ;

4. How he felt separation from him as intolerable and hence found it very easy to sacrifice higher salary and better prospects twice in order to be near to and at the feet of his *Guruji* ;

5. How devotedly he served him during his illness, and performed his official duties, in addition to his own, little caring for his own health or any other thing ;

6. How he imbibed his beautiful higher traits of character, and thus won the full trust and love of his *Guruji Maharaj*.

These do not need recapitulation. But what is most striking and extraordinary is that all throughout his life, Bhagwan Dev Atma maintained most beautiful and pure feelings of true respect, reverence, and gratitude towards his *Guruji Maharaj*. After his death, though Bhagwan came to Lahore and gave up his belief in Vedantic teachings of his *Guruji*, yet this difference in faith did not, in the least, decrease Bhagwan's sense of extreme reverence and indebtedness to him. Bhagwan Dev Atma even gave up belief in God altogether, and propounded a religious philosophy, which is the very antithesis of *Vedant* ; as *Vedant* believed all Nature a fiction and *Brahm* as real, while Bhagwan taught *Brahm* as a huge superstition and Nature as real. Yet Bhagwan's attitude of deep reverence and gratitude towards him was not at all affected. Bhagwan differed in faith from his parents and several other benefactors. But that never in the least affected his sense of gratitude and reverence towards them.

When Bhagwan discovered new truths about the life after death, he remembered his *Guruji*, and tried to impart the light of his own teachings to him. *Though Guruji accepted Bhagwan's light, and became a great helper in his cause, yet Bhagwan remembered him up to the end of his life on this planet as nothing but his Guruji.* The photo of his *Guruji* which Bhagwan obtained through great endeavours and expense, was always hung up in his room. Bhagwan has left a record of *Guruji's* life, and it elevates one's heart to feel the spirit which permeates the pages of his *Guruji's* life.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's personal life strikes us as a great contrast to the lives of those unfortunate souls who for years benefited by Bhagwan's light and power, and yet when they parted on one or other flimsy ground, cloaked under the accommodating and popular pretext of difference of faith, they developed hostility towards him and his cause. Granted that some had honest difference of views, yet they had no occasion for turning ungrateful and hostile. They could by all means part company, but why to forget the favours of a whole life? This is because mankind as a rule is void of gratitude, true reverence and respect. These feelings being absent there is no higher force in them to remind them of their indebtedness. The only forces, that find food when they part, are the forces of vanity and vindictiveness. Both these destroy all sense of true respect and all spirit of indebtedness and urge these ungrateful souls to prove harmful. While talking once about the attitude of a worker of his, who parted from him because of difference of views, Bhagwan was pleased to remark, "He (that worker) does not hate his mother who differs from him; why does he maintain such a wrong attitude in my relation when for years he, by his own admission, received the highest service from me?" There are some among these persecutors of Bhagwan, who say, that by giving up worship of the imaginary God, Bhagwan proved ungrateful. How foolish is this position! One can neither be grateful nor ungrateful to what does not exist. God is a fiction. Expressing any feeling towards a fiction has no meaning. But otherwise read the pages of Bhagwan's life. He has remembered, even with tearful eyes, all such real existences in the vegetable, animal and human worlds, which have directly or indirectly served him.

Bhagwan Dev Atma has, therefore, left for us in fact a wonderful example of what a true disciple ought to be.

VII

BHAGWAN DEV ATMA AS A "GURU."

Bhagwan Dev Atma's life as a *Guru* can be understood by realising the nature of his unique life-vow. In order to do so we must ponder over the following significant utterance of Bhagwan Dev Atma on the day he embraced his most difficult life-mission which we have quoted in Part IV and which, even at the risk of repetition, we quote here for better understanding of this unique phase of Bhagwan's life. On that blessed occasion Bhagwan said:—

"As I have embraced the mission for the good of the whole world, it is but inevitable for me to live in this world and struggle hard to destroy, as far as possible, the reign of untruth and evil whenever and wherever existing in various relations of mankind, and to create and establish in its stead the reign of Truth and Goodness. Hence my renunciation will not at all be of the nature of those selfish *sadhus'* *bairagees'* *sannyasis'* and *faqirs'* of this land who believe in breaking off various ties of relationship and desert all the right responsibilities in connection with them. *My renunciation would rightly consist in making all kinds of sacrifices of wealth, fame, popularity, happiness, comfort, health, power, etc., which may be necessary for fulfilling my highly difficult mission.* I have made the most arduous struggles for converting human souls from the life of low-loves and low-hates, which lead them to falsehoods and evils and makes this earth a veritable hell and renders all their connections and relations most harmful for one another, and which have dethroned living religion of higher life and enthroned irreligious or baser life in their hearts. They have consequently produced misery, pain, sorrow and agonies which have wrung from their hearts cries and lamentations. I have to evolve in their hearts higher forces of higher life in their place. This kind of complete sacrifice or *tiyag* for the fulfilment of my highest mission will be my true *sannyas*."

Little did Bhagwan Dev Atma imagine at that time the intensity, magnitude and agonising nature of the sacrifices which the accomplishment of such a unique mission held in store for him. Mankind was immersed in soul-darkness. Moreover man in general had come to love all such false beliefs, false doctrines, false superstitions, false rites, false ceremonials, false customs and traditions, etc., which such soul-darkness generated. Besides that they loved happiness as the goal of life. They were thereby almost hopelessly enslaved to low-loves and low-hates which made pursuit after happiness inevitable in their hearts. This insane bias for falsehood and evil made them to look upon any and every such person as a real foe who tried, even out of the deepest sympathy, to cure them of these fatal biases. Reformers even in external matters

have met the sharp edge of the insane opposition of the enslaved man. Even such reformers have been persecuted beyond measure who have stood against *Sati* (*i. e.*, burning alive of widows), slavery, enforced widowhood, child-marriage, untouchability, caste system, etc. But when such insane mass of educated and uneducated persons witnessed in Bhagwan the relentless and uncompromising foe of all the falsehoods which they loved more than their lives, all the happiness-based low-loves and low-hates which in fact constituted all that they lived for, they rose with one voice, forgetting their own private and mutual differences to crush the mission of Bhagwan Dev Atma. The weapons that they used in this warfare, partook of their own nature. They were the weapons of inventing and propagating lies, malicious fabrications, monstrous calumnies, and false accusations against Bhagwan through press and on platform, and launching prosecutions in courts by influential persons with a large backing, etc. But Bhagwan loved the highest good of man. Hence he could not turn his back upon it simply for the fear of his being tortured by those for whose highest good he sacrificed everything.

However in spite of all the bitterest persecutions, the love for our highest good in Bhagwan did not abate in any way. Says Bhagwan:—

“During such moments of trials and sufferings, the love for my mission grew deeper and deeper still; and my heart was dominated by its love to such an extent that I felt, that there could be nothing more glorious and more dignified for me than to die for the accomplishment of my life-mission, even though in this noble struggle I were to lose my whole existence, body and soul.”

Thus more and more the men of the world persecuted him, the more dearly did he love our highest good. Is this not an uncommon and most heavenly love?

It was in the year 1892 that the opposition assumed the most stupendous form and Bhagwan met with the darkest clouds of bitterest enmity even from those who were immensely benefited by him, and his heart was wrung so much that it gave out a wail of agony which is bound to melt such hearts into tears as ever come to revere and love Bhagwan. During these darkest moments and excruciating pain of heart, Bhagwan wrote his “*Vilap*.” A long extract from it we give below:—

“Leaving aside outsiders even those who are closely connected with me are not able to realise the true measure of the tribulations of my heart. And when they cannot do so, their sympathy, even if they possess any, is of no avail to me. I am born to endure these extraordinary pains of heart all alone, and forsooth I alone shall have to put up with them. Alas! how lonely do I feel in the midst of these sufferings. Alas! there is none in this world whom I can call my own in this difficult situation of life.



BHAGWAN DEV ATMA
1924.

"A question may arise, what is the source of all these heart-breaking sufferings? Are they the natural fruit of any sinful state of my heart or any crime? Most certainly not. I am free from sins and crimes. Are they due to any low-love in my soul? Decidedly not as there is no low desire so powerful, no egoistic power or propensity so strong as to overwhelm me or over which I do not possess full and complete control, owing to my highest psychic inner forces called *Dev Shakties*. Where then lies the true cause of these pains and agonies that I have to endure? *The cause of my great agonies lies in the sinful and depraved hearts of those perverted persons, the burden of whose salvation from their lower courses of life and also of their evolution into higher forces of life lies on my shoulders*, but who in their ignorance and slavery to low-loves and untruth find the deepest satisfaction in consciously or unconsciously persecuting me. Whatever troubles my mind, affords sinful satisfaction to their souls.

"All these huge troubles are not temporary. They do not extend to a few days or weeks which one may endure by the exercise of the force of will power. But they have been continuing for several years past. The shocks thus received have not only wounded my heart but have cruelly shaken my physical constitution. I have lost my normal physical health. My body has become an abode of serious maladies, one of these maladies has grown very serious and often torments me much. Again, the continuous application of my mind to hard and difficult mental work and the oppressive anxieties I have to bear, have so much enfeebled my nervous system that as a rule it demands enormous energy to concentrate my mind.

"In such a painful state of my body and mind when any enemy of my mission tries to cause any injury, my most sensitive feelings receive a terrible shock which rudely shakes my body and soul; but when they make any serious attack, few can measure the intensity of pain, restlessness and agony of heart which I consequently suffer.

"Throw a stone upon a mound of sand, it would not produce much disturbance but fling the self-same stone into a pond of water and the circles, that its impact on water produces, go on widening and widening to a very great extent. Similarly when any wrong is committed, people are affected thereby according to their innate nature or sensitiveness. A sinful man would, as a rule, feel no shock when any infamous or heinous sin is being committed in his presence. Even if he does feel anything, it is not appreciable. But I feel such manifestations of sinful hearts most acutely and they cause me pain and agony of heart which is simply indescribable.

"Why do I feel all this so acutely and why does any shock affect me so very painfully? This is because my heart is not like the heart of a world-worshipper or a sinner. It is absolutely unlike theirs. Because of the highest psychic or divine forces that it possesses, the difference is not simply of degree; it is one of kind.

Hence the pain and agony that is caused to me by every wrong act, is commensurate with the highest and most sensitive nature of my feelings. What is very much to be regretted is, that it is not only the opponents who deal these hard blows on my heart but even my own followers do so who sit at my feet for their training. When they commit any wrong or deviate from any higher principle of conduct that I love and cherish, my sufferings are unbearable. Where will the world find a record of all these series of long and continuous shocks to my heart and injuries to my body which the inveterate opponents of my mission, the feeble friends of my cause, the faithless deserters of my mission and vindictive and malicious men have inflicted on me? Alas! there is none who can draw a true picture and place before the world true record of all these my terrible sufferings."

WHY DID NOT BHAGWAN RENOUNCE THE WORLD AND LEAVE IT
TO ITS OWN FATE?

"An admirer of the ancient philosophy of our land," continues Bhagwan, "could perhaps give me the following advice. As thou art completely above every kind of undue worldly attachment and thou doest not, owing to thy unique life and personality, belong to this world, why dost thou continue at all to live among and work for the highest good of these people and suffer such tortures, agonies and persecutions at their hands? Why dost thou not altogether cut off thy connection from that source wherefrom all these shocks and sufferings proceed?"

"To all these questions I can make only one reply that my mission is a special one and that my manifestation in Nature is to serve some special purpose, the accomplishment whereof is indispensable for the regeneration of this country and for the highest spiritual and moral evolution of the whole world; and that such a unique purpose can never be achieved without my undergoing these unparalleled and crushing sufferings."

Such a splendid and unique love could not make it possible for Bhagwan to give up the work of the highest spiritual and moral evolution of the world. He was therefore prepared to bear all the extreme sufferings in order to minister to the highest service of our souls. This is motherly love taken to the utmost pitch by his most unselfish nature. Bhagwan as a *Guru*, therefore :

(1) could not but serve all beings without the expectation of the least return ;

(2) could not shut his door in the face of any person, however sinful, if he showed the least desire or inclination to avail himself of the services of Bhagwan ;

(3) could not harbour the least tinge of hatred for any person or thing as that was absolutely inconsistent with the unique love that he possessed for the highest good of the entire humanity and the world ;

(4) could not but forgive repeatedly and too often all trespasses and even acts of infidelity or treason on the part of his followers and serve them so long as they were not hopeless or so long as they did not refuse all ministrations of his ;

(5) could not help offering best wishes for the highest good even of his worst enemies, as he realised them to be diseased and insane souls who were to be pitied for all that they did in their insane and depraved condition ;

(6) could not but feel deep joy when he found even his worst enemies showing any good trait or act of unselfish service ;

(7) could not but feel the deepest joy when he saw any one struggling to get freedom from any low-love or low-hate or to evolve feelings of unselfish service. When any one progressed by his great and unique efforts, he grew more and more tender and serviceable to him like a loving mother ;

(8) could never think of his own bodily health, his own comfort, his own happiness and even his existence, when he saw before him souls whom he loved to help forward into the path of higher life ;

(9) could never hesitate to make all the sacrifices of his wealth, possessions, fame, name, children, *sewaks*, etc., when his love for doing the highest service of the world demanded them ;

(10) could not develop either attachments or biases for any person or thing as all these were antagonistic to the love of Truth and love of Goodness which ruled his life. He could only love what was true in all the departments of life and what was good in various relations of man with human and subhuman kingdoms. He was absolutely against untruth and evil which all the attachments and biases for persons and things involve as a matter of course ;

(11) could not prove untrue to the trust he had taken of the highest good of life and interests of those, who had taken shelter at his feet, and went to the fullest extent of doing all that was possible, to give them the benefit of his loving protection and the fullest shelter ;

(12) could not resort to any wrong policy, political diplomacy and wrong means in the service of his unique mission, as he felt all these to be fatal poisons for higher life. Bhagwan violently attacked all hypocrisy in religious matters or even otherwise and strongly condemned the most dangerous doctrine of "end justifies means," because all this outraged the principles of truth and goodness and hence the law of the evolution of higher life ;

(13) could not permit those attached to his cause to publish even any unconscious wrong against his worst enemies (even those who had specialised in publishing lies against Bhagwan) and got the correction published as soon as he was aware of any such mistake ;

(14) could not compromise with any lapse committed even by those considered high in society, and took immediate notice of such lapses without any consideration of the concerned man's station in society ;

(15) could not put up with the selfishness, self-will or vanity, or other lower forces ruling any of his *sewaks*, and endeavoured hard to rescue them from their vile grip by creating in them the consciousness of the evils of their horrible nature ;

(16) could not permit wealth, social position, official position, degrees or titles to raise their heads before the majesty of higher life, and placed all these acquisitions as means to serve the higher evolution of the soul and not as an end by itself ;

(17) could not allow any cowardice in the fight for truth and goodness, and strongly repudiated clinging to false symbols, false customs, false rituals, false ceremonials on being conscious of their being false, and tried to awaken courage in his followers and others to harmonise their thoughts with practice. He thus tried to produce a race of brave good men ;

(18) could not let his followers pin faith on worldly possessions or worldly help as against pure and true faith in the law of evolution which has, in its long history extending to millions of years, proved the fact, that in war between the forces of truth and untruth, it is the truth that ultimately prevails, and in the war between the forces of goodness and evil, it is the goodness that ultimately triumphs ;

(19) could not bear to see women being treated as chattels or inferior beings, and could not allow different standards of life for men and women. He brought women on absolute equality with men in all avenues of progress and rights, and gave them equal opportunities for progress. In Dev Samaj, woman is restored to the full measure of self-respect and true self-determination ;

(20) could not bear to see any wanton act calculated to harm any animal, vegetable and mineral existence, or to cut short its life and usefulness, and laid down all such acts, which unduly harm their forms, functions and life as sins.

Such is the life and such is the ideal which Bhagwan Dev Atma as *Guru* endeavoured hard, up to his last day, to develop in his followers at any risk of harm or loss to his bodily powers and possessions.

With these introductory remarks we give some facts, which prove him to be the highest benefactor and protector for us—his followers.

GREATEST REFUGE OR PROTECTOR FOR HIS HUMBLE FOLLOWERS.

We quote the following' from the anecdotes of Bhagwan Dev Atma's life published in the Science-Grounded Religion for June 1924 :—

"The late revered Shrimati Dr. Kumari Prem Devi, lady worker of Dev Samaj, has left behind a very elevating example of life and work for the members of the Dev Samaj. It was at the age of twelve or thirteen

that the precious and fine soul of Kumariji felt an altruistic attraction and reverence for the *Dev Rup* of the Dev Atma. This higher attraction and reverence and the early awakened strong desire to attain higher life enabled her to assimilate Bhagwan Dev Atma's highest psychic influences and thus profit materially by Bhagwan's utterances and his unique writings. When she had joined the Medical School, Lahore, her father was employed at Amritsar, and he, therefore, found no better place than to put his daughter, under the protection of Bhagwan. When her parents came to Lahore, she went and lived with them. But even then, she used to come and attend Bhagwan's meetings in Dev Ashram. When she grew up, her parents naturally wished to get her married; but she did not like to marry, partly because her health was not good and partly because she desired to devote all her energies to the highest mission of Bhagwan and the highest service of her sex. Her parents, however, instead of co-operating with her in her noble and elevated purpose of life, took up an attitude of hostility to her. They thought, that they would not succeed in influencing her to accede to their plan, so long as she felt higher attraction for the highest psychic forces of Bhagwan Dev Atma. They hit upon a plan of permanently stopping her from going to Bhagwan's Ashram to attend his meetings. This move on the part of the parents pained Bhagwan considerably. But he did not interfere in the matter, because Kumariji was not yet eighteen and till she reached that age, it was necessary for her to remain under the protection of her legal guardians.

Kumariji had thus to accept the cruel ban on the liberty of her actions. But she could not, at any time, be brought round to accede to her parent's wishes. Their efforts as well as the efforts of all others (invited to influence her) to persuade her to enter into wedlock proved futile. When she reached the age of majority, she commenced attending meetings of Bhagwan Dev Atma. Her parents did not like this. Hence one day when she returned to her father's house after attending a meeting in Dev Ashram, her father lost temper and closed the door in her face saying, "Go and seek protection wherever you can. You have nothing to do with us." This was a critical time for her. She was a helpless girl, and the hour was one of night. Temporarily she felt the world grow dark, but after a while, she saw no other way but to seek shelter of Bhagwan. She, therefore, retraced her footsteps towards Dev Ashram. Bhagwan felt for her helpless condition keenly, and extended his hand of protection to her. From that time, she began to live undisturbed life under the roof of Bhagwan.

What unholy attempts were made to persuade or threaten Bhagwan to withdraw his hand of protection from this helpless but higher soul, would be evident from the following:—

(1) The father of Dr. Kumari Prem Devi was a worldly-wise man. He did not like his daughter to remain under the shelter of

Bhagwan. In the heart of his hearts, he knew that his daughter would be better protected under the direct guardianship of Bhagwan than even under his own roof. But his community looked askance at her living in a strangers' house leaving her father's roof. He dreaded the opinion of his community. He therefore felt he was being disgraced. It did not weigh with him whether the opinion of his community was right or wrong. He therefore devised a plan to bring her back to his house and for that purpose began visiting Dev Ashram. One day, he sought an interview with Bhagwan and he informed him that he wished to take her back to his house. Bhagwan said, "Your daughter has attained majority, you cannot therefore apply physical force and thus coerce her to go with you. But if, of her own accord, she expresses her willingness to accompany you and chooses to remain in your house, she is free to go. You know you have driven her out of your house. In her forlorn state, she sought my shelter, which was given to her. Hence, if she chooses not to go with you, we would not only *not* turn her out, but do all in our power to help her."

Kumariji's father was taken aback by such a candid talk and with a note of threat remarked, "Then, Sir, we shall have recourse to some other method." He meant, thereby to convey that he will seek the help of Law. But Bhagwan did not take note of this threat.

(2) He did not go to court, for he knew but too well, that he had no cause of action. But he engineered some new devices to achieve his object. He made a profession of very keen desire for higher association or *Sangat*, and began to regularly attend meetings in the Dev Ashram. After some days, he expressed a wish to come and permanently reside in Dev Ashram, as his daughter had done, in order to benefit his soul by higher environments. He actually came and lived in the Dev Ashram. When he had remained there for some time, he had gained some footing. One day, when Bhagwan Dev Atma was going out on his usual morning walk, he prayed for permission to accompany him. Bhagwan permitted him to do so. On the way, he made an outward show of his longing to possess higher life. Then slowly he wheeled round to his main object, and said :—

"From the time Prem Devi has left stopping in the house, her mother and her brother have considerably suffered in soul-life. If you could direct her to go and live in our house, we all would mutually benefit in religious life."

This worldly-wise man perhaps thought that if he would cloak his object in the guise of an appeal in the name of religion, the Dev Atma would at once give in, and he would thus realise his object by such means. Little did he realise that the Dev Atma possessed a soul which could never respond to an improper appeal even though made in the name of religion. This manifestation of insincerity

or hypocritical appeal deeply shocked the most sensitive heart of Bhagwan, who very candidly and definitely told him that he had already said his final word on the subject, and concluded thus :—

"Remember, that if by my following the path of goodness, this entire globe were to twist and turn, I would not budge an inch from the right course. I have not kept your girl in prison. If she is living under my roof, she is doing so of her own free choice. If she chooses to accompany you to your house, by all means take her. I would not in the least object to her choice. But never will I drive out from my protection one who has sought my shelter and thus *compel* her to go with you."

This forceful and frank reply silenced him and thus his second plan came to nought.

(3) But failure to achieve his object even second time did not discourage Kumariji's father. He brought a proposal to Bhagwan, that it was his intention to open a dispensary in his house, if his daughter could go and serve her sisters there. This was a good proposal though the motive behind was hardly praiseworthy. Bhagwan and Dr. Prem Devi herself approved of it. She, thereafter, commenced going to her house and attend the patients. But after she had done her day's work, she would return to Dev Ashram. For a long time, she continued serving there. Besides rendering medical help, she also held meetings in her father's house, and delivered sermons to the ladies assembled there. During this long period when she went there daily, her parents often insisted upon her to dwell permanently there. But Kumariji did not at all agree to their such prayer. She could not bear to give up living in the higher environments of higher people and go and breathe in the lower environments of worldly people.

(4) Then came an hour of great trial for Bhagwan. The enemies of his mission found in this a ready material to weave a tangle of basest insinuations and darkest calumnies against Bhagwan's fairest name. This was done in order to smash the mission completely. Bhagwan held very dear the most benevolent work of the highest uplift of world in which he was engaged. The worshippers of one God took the most aggressive part in this unholy crusade. They had full faith that the credulous world would easily accept whatever they wrote in press, and spoke on platform as gospel truth, and Bhagwan would thus be hated by all. The false charges laid against him would bring about his disgrace. They believed, that dismayed by such a violent dust storm of scandal or calumny, Bhagwan would withdraw his protection from Kumariji and thus they would, by such mean ways, achieve their sinful object. They thought that even if they failed in the main object, they would succeed in having cast a permanent blot on Bhagwan's purest name and in having besmirched his unique mission.

This was indeed a time of great trial for Bhagwan. The enemies stood arrayed and determined to destroy the one thing, the Dev Atma lived for and cherished above his life, *i.e.*, his life-mission. There was no stone left unturned by them in their infamous but well-organised project.

But these enemies little comprehended that Bhagwan Dev Atma did not live a life on level with them, but he stood perched on the high mountain peaks of truth and goodness. He witnessed the raging fury of the ocean of their opposition striking against his mission. Perched on high, he realised that the ship of his life-mission would sail safest through these most tumultuous waves. He, therefore, cared not a straw for them, and steered the ship of his mission safe and sound to the anchorage.

(5) In those days, a European clergyman, named Thomas Evans, who was well known in the country as a great and enthusiastic worker in the cause of temperance, visited Lahore and was guest of reverend Forman. One day, both these venerable clergymen visited Bhagwan and referring to the utterly false and calumnious accusations that the so-called devotees of one God had manufactured and spread all round him, they told Bhagwan that it would be better and more befitting, if he could send away the girl to her parents as, thereby he would not only silence all foul propaganda, but would save his cause from threatened harm. Such an advice from two venerable clergymen shocked Bhagwan beyond measure. Led by his innate forces of complete love of truth and goodness he emphatically said, "I can, under no circumstances or out of fear of all kinds of opposition, turn out one who has sought my shelter. Instead of getting help in the path of truth and goodness, if I am subjected to any form of persecution, pain or disgrace, I would welcome them. *Nobody can do any good by deserting higher path and sacrificing truth and goodness.* I know for certain, that since I am in the right, I am bound to succeed. I am only extremely sorry to find that men of your position and standing who are preachers of religion should tender me such an advice."

This left both these preachers of Christian religion speechless.

(6) Some time after that, Bhagwan went to attend the Indian National Congress at Bombay. There, Babu Partap Chandra Mozumdar, a renowned leader of Brahmo Samaj suggested the same thing to Bhagwan, so that, thereby he may save himself from the persecutions. Fired by love of truth Bhagwan returned the same reply to him which also silenced him.

The net result of all this fight between the forces of untruth and evil, and forces of truth and goodness, was that Bhagwan Dev Atma's name came out most glorious and those who indulged in the basest and darkest calumnies against a defenceless girl and the most spotless name of Bhagwan stand condemned for all times.

This has all along been Bhagwan's attitude towards his followers or *sewaks*. They found in their *Guru* the greatest protector.

BHAGWAN'S FEELINGS FOR THE SAFETY OF HIS "SEWAKS."

One of the anecdotes of Bhagwan's life in this connection was published in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for April 1916, and is given below :—

"Two years ago, when Bhagwan was graciously pleased to come to Sukkur, two *sewaks* were sent with his approval for collecting funds for the various noble institutions of the Dev Samaj. They had to work in several villages, and while it was evening and they were still at work, a violent gale rose and blew furiously for about three or four hours. But since they were well clad and the enthusiasm for the work kept them warm, they successfully completed their tour. When they returned, Bhagwan, as usual, appreciated their humble efforts and then graciously said, "When the wind storm arose and cold wind blew piercingly, my thoughts repeatedly ran towards you both. I was anxious as to how you both were faring. I even wished that you may better not have gone and exposed yourselves to such most inclement weather." (The month of the season was the coldest.)

This wonderful solicitude of Bhagwan for the safety of his humble *sewaks* touched all very deeply.

Another anecdote also is given there :—

"Shriman Sardar Jamiat Singh is a very loyal, grateful and servicable *sewak* of Bhagwan. All his hair is grey. He feels for Bhagwan. But Bhagwan's feeling for him is simply superb. On several occasions, Sardar Sahib has gone to Solon for Bhagwan's *darshan*. If Bhagwan has been apprised of Sardar Sahib's intended visit and the time of the arrival of the train, he does not sit unmoved. After the arrival of the train his anxiety grows still more and he repeatedly asks if Sardar Sahib has reached the Ashram. Sometimes Bhagwan would come out of his room and stand outside in expectation of Sardar Sahib's arrival in the Ashram. The meeting of Bhagwan with a devoted *sewak* under such circumstances is a sight too touching for words. Such a solicitude for his own followers has given to Bhagwan a band of devoted disciples."

It was rather a rule with Bhagwan that when any of his *sewaks* or *sewakas* who was serviceable to his cause in any way, was to come to Solon for his *darshan*, Bhagwan used to personally see that proper arrangements were made for his or her stay and also that all the requisite things were provided for in the best possible manner.

BHAGWAN OVERLOOKED EVEN ACTS OF DARKEST INGRATITUDE IN "SEWAKS" IF THEY WISHED TO REFORM THEMSELVES.

In spite of possessing the strongest hatred for untruth and wrong in all their various forms and phases, Bhagwan Dev Atma

possessed complete love for helping the sinner. This explains how Bhagwan Dev Atma could not turn out souls who, while living at his feet, proved a constant source of trouble and heart-breaking shocks to him because of their several shortcomings and low-likes, etc. This speaks of the infinite capacity for forgiveness which Bhagwan possessed and the abounding love he cherished for the highest good of mankind.

In the history of the Dev Samaj some ungrateful people have won a corner for notoriety. They were those who had received incalculable favours from Dev Samaj. But when one or other low-like of their life asserted itself, they not only lost the privilege of being Bhagwan's *sewaks* but paid Bhagwan by ingratitude which indeed is without parallel. One of these notorious but unfortunate souls was Abdul Ghaffur afterwards known as Dharampal of Arya Samaj about whom a mention has already been made in some chapter of this volume.

After Abdul Ghaffur had ceased to be a member of the Dev Samaj, he remembered the unique services done to him by the Dev Samaj for several months before he came to be poisoned by the Arya Samaj. After some years he began to manifest the Arya spirit, and wrote :—

“Gentlemen of Arya Samaj knowing that I had remained in Dev Samaj for years, made a demand on me that I should either publish something against the Dev Samaj or furnish them with materials against it. From all the four corners of the Arya Samaj I was requested to do so.

“But what deeply concerned me was as to how best I should begin war against Dev Samaj? *I was anxious to have documents revealing their inner life, but the question was how to get them, and how to humiliate them in this mighty war.* When the Arya Samaj pressed me harder, the first thing that I wanted to attempt was to lay my hold on the Dev Samaj literature and to devise the ways and means to succeed in my war against the Dev Samaj.

“*I attempted to get into touch with the Dev Samaj people..... Several members of the Dev Samaj used several times to meet me on the way Some of those whom I met began to show treason against the Dev Samaj Three or four actually grew hostile to the Dev Samaj Thus the policy I had adopted began to bear fruit.*” (Italics are ours.)

He utilised these treacherous men to steal papers and documents from the Dev Samaj office where they were employed, and they gave them to Dharampal. These stolen documents he included in the most obnoxious booklet, he published against Bhagwan and the Dev Samaj on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations held in honour of Bhagwan's Life-Mission in 1907.

The man who had stolen many of these papers from the files of the Dev Samaj office where he served as a clerk, was Pandit Mansa Ram. Bhagwan Dev Atma had done the greatest service to him and his family and he paid him by this terrible ingratitude. But after about five years this traitor to Bhagwan's cause again began to change. Under very strange circumstances, he went into a receptive condition of his mind and wrote to Bhagwan from his sick bed that he did not wish to die as a traitor to him.

This change in his heart again opened wide the gates of Bhagwan's mercy to him. Bhagwan's most tender heart at once melted and applied his great powers to elevate and ennoble the Pandit's life, so long as the Pandit was alive. He was allowed to reside in higher environments. His two girls who were motherless and for whom, even in his worst moments, he found no safe refuge outside the Dev Samaj, began to reside in the Dev Samaj Girls' High School hostel under the special charge of a lady worker of the Samaj.

In these higher environments and on getting Bhagwan's unique influences he began to feel pain for his great sin. He felt a tremendous urge to wash his soul clean and the first step that he took was to make a full and free admission of the part played by him in this treason against the Dev Samaj. He gave a detailed account of the papers and documents that he had stolen and then said in his letter to the Secretary, Dev Samaj :—

"The above crime is the most reprehensible both from legal and moral points of view. I have fully and frankly laid before you the true facts in writing. I did not want to make a mere *verbal* confession as one can deny that. It is impossible to deny what one has put in black and white. I now give you full discretion to subject me to any kind of punishment for this never-to-be pardoned crime. By all means publish my statement in various papers, blacken my face, write the word 'thief' on my forehead, take me through bazaar so that I may look as black outwardly as I am tarred internally by these dirty acts I am a great sinner, I am a dangerous person, I am a tyrant and the Dev Samaj is oppressed by me. I have wilfully done harm to the Dev Samaj and it is open to it to make me pay for it. I am a serpent. I have bitten the Dev Samaj. I have stung Bhagwan who is my highest benefactor

"There is no room in the world for *Guru Nindak* (maligner of his preceptor) and *Guru Hatyara* (oppressor of his preceptor). I am guilty of both these grave sins. I am a sinner of a type whose sin cannot be adequately described in words"

He appointed Dev Samajists as his trustees. He died and the girls completed their education in the Dev Samaj. While he was on his death-bed, he felt relieved that his children were safe and well sheltered. Thus Bhagwan and his Society stood by him, because he desired to better himself and sought Bhagwan's shelter for that purpose, even though he was once a great traitor.

This fact clearly shows that Bhagwan in fact hated evil and not the evil-doer. Once the evil-doer sought help to get free from his evil, Bhagwan whole-heartedly ministered to him. Hatred of a person however dark and evil was impossible for Bhagwan.

Bhagwan Dev Atma's tender regard for his followers.—Bhagwan's regard for us—his insignificant followers—was most remarkable. We give below some *incidents* of his life published in the *Science-Grounded Religion* for 1916 to illustrate this wonderful phase of Bhagwan's life as a *Guru*:—

"Last December the writer had the good fortune to do some slight writing work in the office of Bhagwan Dev Atma. There were several things which touched him deeply. It appeared that every need of those working there was anticipated. If a chair was placed, it was a beautiful chair. On the table there were all the materials ready. The table-cloth was not only neat but of a good quality. The steel pen and the ink-pot kept there were quite up to the mark. What struck the writer was Bhagwan's solicitous regard for those who came there to work for his cause. He personally looked after the necessities that ought to be there. The whole room seemed to say "Welcome, hearty respects to one who does Bhagwan's work." The writer knows his utter insignificance before Bhagwan's unique personality. Bhagwan's own unique light was guiding and enabling us to contribute our little mite in his cause of the highest evolution of humanity. But *Bhagwan viewed with sacredness all powers however trivial or otherwise which helped the cause of evolution.* Hence when the writer showed an intention of giving two or three hours every day to do translation work, everything was made convenient and attractive for him.

"Bhagwan would come and by his most gracious presence inspire us to a great extent. But when we got up, he was pleased to remark, "When I come to office, go on with your work. Don't disturb yourselves. Let him alone stand, with whom I have to speak and do something, others need not stand and leave their work."

Such was Bhagwan's regard even for his insignificant *sewaks* who sought his protection.

"While the Master is adamant against any evil, he is most tender and solicitous about the true interests of his humble followers. The lovers of sins and falsehoods or base self-love find in him a formidable personality to deal with and therefore to be counted and dreaded, but those who have developed consciousness of their soul, and any the least feeling for its best good, find in him the most ministering and truest friend.

"Last year the Master became very seriously ill, because in his endeavours to elevate the lives of his humble followers—those at Lahore or *mofussil*—he held powerful meetings which told very heavily on his debilitated health, and his case became very critical.

In that condition he had to go to Solon. I had the honour and privilege to be at his feet. When a day or two passed and the Master was hardly able to speak or walk, I was astonished to learn his having sent for me. When I approached him, I was asked if I had been provided with this or that thing, this or that convenience. He named one thing particularly and asked me if I was given that. I said, "No," but I added that I could very comfortably do without it. But the Master was not satisfied and pressed his own thing to be taken and used by me.

"Then again one day when I was out for a walk, the Master entered my room to see if I was comfortably lodged. He found a screen of my door a bit damaged and before I returned he had it mended. But Solon climate did not agree with his health and he had to come back to Lahore, so his health was very weak. He could go up stairs with very great difficulty. It was then that I caught fever, and I was lying on a sick-bed on the first floor of the Memorial Mandir. The Master was informed of my illness and forgetting all about his own health, he wanted to come up to see me and to cheer me up. But when I learnt that the Master was trying to come up and knowing what strain it would be on his already weak health, I could not bear the idea and before the Master had got on the first step I was at his feet to receive his unique benedictions and genuine sympathies."

Bhagwan Dev Atma's feeling of gratitude for his humble followers.—Bhagwan Dev Atma was the highest benefactor of his *sewaks*. Gratitude was due from them to him rather than from him to them. And yet Bhagwan never forgot the services done to him even by those who benefited the most by him. We quote the following from the *Science-Grounded Religion* for February 1916, page 6 :—

"On his Jubilee Mahotsav when a number of persons offered their entire lives for Bhagwan's unique cause, he addressed one among them thus:—'Here is Sardar Jamiat Singh, whose one act of service I have never forgotten. When years ago my enemies had launched several civil and criminal cases against me, it was their intention to get me into lock-up. With that end they got warrants issued against me. In one case I requested a European Bank Manager, with whose bank I had accounts, to put in bail for me on the strength and security of my money with him. But when I went to Ferozepore my kind friends had other warrants issued against me in the court in another case. It was there, when no other man was present who could come forward to stand my security, that Sardar Jamiat Singhji stood security for me and thus frustrated the evil designs of my enemies to see me handcuffed.' So saying Bhagwan was moved to tears, which thrilled the entire audience, many among them shedding silent tears, while some actually burst into loud sobs."

The spiritual needs of the sewaks counted above the consideration of his Personal Health.—“(a) It was during one of the periods of Master's serious illnesses at Solon that one of his humble workers was going on his errand of bringing “Water cress” for the use of the Master. That was the usual time for our joint religious meeting. Hence when the Master saw him going, he stopped him and said, “go and attend the *Sadhan* first and then go in search of that thing.” But knowing the anxiety of the Master we had already changed the hour of the meeting. Hence when that humble follower of his informed him of the change of time, he was allowed to go.

“(b) It was during those days again when the Master was slowly recovering strength and taking to short walks in front of his residence, that he used to divert himself by serving the plants as is his wont. One day as he was so engaged, his domestic attendant was there to help him. Now the Master's health demanded that he should have the attendant with him to help him finish the work. But as soon as the bell of the meeting rang and the people began to go to the *Sadhan* room, the Master at once asked the attendant to go and attend the meeting. Every personal consideration of his paled, before the spiritual needs of his attendant, who is also his *sewak*.”

Bhagwan Dev Atma's respect for his disciples.—On the 14th July, 1887, Bhagwan Dev Atma wrote a letter to one of his disciples in which he made mention of an incident which we give below :—

“One of his *sewaks* had shown remarkable change for higher life in his soul. Bhagwan was deeply impressed by his life and activities. The change was due to Bhagwan's own unique influences. But even then his unique heart felt deeply stirred and he could not resist making a practical expression of the respect he cherished for him. He invited that disciple to his house. Bhagwan prepared food for him with his own sacred hands. When the disciple reached Bhagwan's house he was warmly greeted. Bhagwan then washed his hands, his face and his feet with his own most sacred hands. Then he gave him a seat of honour to sit. When Bhagwan washed his disciple's feet he addressed him thus, ‘Blessed are your feet which run about hither and thither in service of the Dev Samaj and help you to win people for it. While washing your such feet, I feel overjoyed and blessed.’

“The disciple was also deeply touched by such an expression of feelings by Bhagwan and he said :—

“At this moment I feel myself uplifted to regions higher than heaven itself.”

Bhagwan Dev Atma's deepest compassion for his disciples.—Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed compassion for the saving of degraded souls which is unparalleled. His one aim was to awaken souls to the horror of low-loves and low-hates, create repulsion for them in

fit souls and develop progressive higher life in them, so that they may be able to save their souls as far as possible from the dissolutionary course and march on the path of higher life. This could be possible only if any of us could cultivate in our hearts progressive psychic love for the *Dev Prabhavs* of Bhagwan Dev Atma. If that supreme feeling (*i.e.*, love) was not possible, the next best thing was to develop at least that much of deep reverence as could keep a man above the lower or debasing courses of his life and enable him to give Bhagwan's guidance unquestioned deference. Every low-love and every low-hate has an ever-present tendency to wholly capture both the mental and physical powers of man. In order to gratify themselves they impel a man to sacrifice everything even his very life. If their influence is stronger than the influence of any moral or higher feeling, they overpower the noble part in man and bring about his fall. This warfare is going on daily and hourly in the internal being of man. Those who grope in utter darkness about soul, do not realise that such a battle is being fought on the field of their heart and that the forces inimical to better life and progress are triumphing. The infidelity, the moral degradation, the callous indifference to the avowed higher principles of life, the sacrifice of life-long sacred vows, the desertion of higher cause—all these are the outward symptoms of the triumph of the meaner and baser feelings of man over his nobler ones.

Such a woeful state of man has assumed a most horrible aspect in India. India has weltered for the last thousands of years in the most sickening mire of the falsehood that this universe is a myth and the so-called *Brahm* is the only reality. This perverted philosophy produced its inevitable consequences. It was for this that Indians failed to develop the consciousness of any relation with organised society or nation or even to feel the need of maintaining loyal relation with any cause or person. It is only when we realise the individuals and social organisations as real that we feel the bounden duty of establishing real relationship with them and keeping ourselves loyal to them. The result of all this was that while fiction permeated the very marrow of India, low-loves and low-hates became the ruling master forces of the largest majority of Indians.

Bhagwan Dev Atma started his unique work in India. By his most wonderful and phenomenal efforts he shook many out of the stupor produced by the age-long fictions and degeneration. He conveyed his unique light to them and enabled them by his unique power to get freedom from many false beliefs, superstitions, harmful practices, evil thoughts and deeds and some of their low-loves and low-hates. He succeeded in awakening some higher feelings in some, and their hearts were captivated by the unique cause.

Though such souls won great appreciation and respect from those who came in contact with them and were believed as miracles of Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique light and power, yet they did not come up to the standard of Bhagwan. On account of the absence

of higher love and devotion in their hearts for Bhagwan Dev Atma's unique influences or even of the feelings of unshakable reverence for him, they, not unoften, accepted the guidance of their own desires, own impulses and own unillumined hearts and forsook Bhagwan's guidance. This self-will is the bane of India. This self-will compels a man to desert his post of duty and grow disloyal.

Such souls, as could be expected, proved a source of extreme suffering to Bhagwan because his own unique forces had made it impossible for him to let fear or any other voice stand in the way of his unique mission. These unique forces made it inevitable for him to be absolutely true in all his dealings in all relations. As an absolutely chaste woman considers even a passing thought of unchastity as pouring live coals on her person, in the same way, the absolutely true and loyal soul of Bhagwan several times tossed in agony at the conduct of those who showed disloyal conduct in relation to him or his cause.

The second great cause of Bhagwan's sufferings, so far as his own disciples were concerned, was the fact that they did not progress in higher life to the extent that they were capable of. But though Bhagwan saw all this, he could not give up the unique work of saving human souls as a thankless task. He could not be disloyal to his own vow because we did not exert ourselves for our good to the desired extent.

Bhagwan Dev Atma therefore continued up to his last moment to think of our highest welfare and to do all that was possible to save us from our own destructive forces and to develop higher or constructive forces in our soul.

Had we been merely passive or had we in all cases realised that our self-will was our fatal enemy and that its guidance was most harmful, which made us disloyal to Bhagwan or to our own soul-welfare and if with such a penitent heart, we could always approach Bhagwan to save us, he would have felt some satisfaction in his heart. But the sovereignty of *ghamand* or self-love in most cases was so great that those suffering from it, could not make bold even to admit that they were wrong. On the contrary, they tried to justify their most unjustifiable behaviour or at least offer extenuating circumstances in its defence. This conduct being most perverted, naturally pained Bhagwan to the utmost extent. If I have harmed another and my self-love stands in my defence and instead of making an honest confession that I was wrong, I begin to justify my conduct, I am bound not only to add insult to the injury, but I would also close the door even of my own progress and get more and more estranged from him. If I am blind to the highest welfare of my life which demands complete purification from all my conscious or unconscious wrongs done in relation to others, I would not only defend my lapses but I must further develop hatred for all those who might try to enlighten me about my wrong conduct.

Such was the attitude of many of us in relation to Bhagwan. We committed wrongs in his relation. Yet under the influence of self-love, we tried to feel that we were in the right. So long as the *sewaks* did not cleanse their heart from such impurities but continued to defend their conduct, they not only got estranged from, but even went in most cases to the length of feeling hatred for our greatest guide and saviour.

Bhagwan, though he felt deeply wrung in his heart at all this, pitied us as the victims of mean forces, and out of the boundless compassion, he felt for us, he applied himself with greater zeal to save us.

The following few quotations or admissions by his own workers would amply illustrate how many of us proved a source of pain and agony to him and how mother-like he ministered to our ailing souls not caring for his own pains:—

EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESSES PRESENTED TO BHAGWAN BY
HIS FOLLOWERS.

"Bhagwan! when we reflect on our lives and see what return we have made unto thee for thy invaluable favours, we are filled with shame and pain. All that could be expected of us was, that we should have proved such capable and loyal followers by being truly useful in thy mission as to have lightened thy load of heavy and Herculean task which thou art engaged in accomplishing. But on the contrary, we have added to thy anxieties. We did not abide by thy light which thou didst give us even for the welfare of our own soul-life. We shot thy most tender heart with very painful arrows in the form of the lapses of duty and other sinful acts of our life. To-day on this occasion of thy blessed birthday, we once more review our lives and express our sense of humiliation and pain for our conduct in thy relation" (1904).

"Even those, who have been attracted by thy unique highest psychic forces and have accepted thy refuge, have in most cases inflicted on thee most horrible and unendurable heart shocks because of their inherited low nature and sinful or lower courses of life. But if any of these indebted souls has turned Judas, he has by his utterly satanic conduct and deeds subjected thee to those heart-breaking shocks which are indescribable.

"Thou hast suffered unbearable hardships, even at the hands of thy children and the nearest of kin which have added to thy agony and restlessness.

"All these sufferings have brought about the wreckage of thy health and this has continued during the last twenty-eight years and has several times brought thee to the verge of death.

"It is again beyond the power of pen to adequately describe those persecutions and terrible shocks which thou hast suffered for the last fourteen months at the hands of a most ungrateful worker of thine. Thou hadst nurtured him for twenty-four years and according to his own confessions he had received incalculable favours at thy hands,

so much so that his entire being was burdened with thy favours. Yet because thou hadst to turn him out of the Samaj for a dark and sinful deed (of course on his refusing to give it up), he turned to be a most callous Judas. This dark soul had so much faith in his own lower powers that out of vanity, he had declared that thou wouldst not be able to survive the onslaughts of his ungrateful attacks." (1914).

QUOTATIONS FROM SOME LETTERS (OUT OF HUNDREDS) OF SEVERAL WORKERS OF BHAGWAN.

Shriman Mohan Dev who at the age of twenty-eight renounced his brilliant worldly prospects and surrendered all his powers for Bhagwan's unique cause, and who died in the month of January 1929 at the age of over sixty-eight years as a loyal and devoted apostle of Bhagwan, thus wrote in one of his letters in 1914 to Bhagwan Dev Atma :—

"Thou wert pleased to take me under thy protection led by thy supreme love of good and by thy unique life-vow which consists in protecting and improving the life of sinners. Not only hadst thou to take up on thy broad shoulders the task of preserving and maintaining my soul-life, but even the burden of maintaining my body, and thou hast been doing a lot of good to me in both these respects. Though thou hadst to suffer pains, owing to my various shortcomings and low habits, and thou hadst to pass through excessive troubles while dealing with my unreformed soul, void of the higher feelings of altruistic reverence and faith, and though thou hadst to suffer the arrows of disappointments owing to my inherent inability, thou wert pleased out of sheer compassion to let me live at thy feet and endeavoured in various ways to elevate me, in the hope that my life may possibly take a progressive turn. The result of this extreme grace of thine, thy good wishes and thy efforts is that my life has undergone a change for the better and I witness with reverence and gratitude all this change as also the fruits that accrue from it. By my personal experience coupled with what I have witnessed in the lives of hundreds of other souls, who have been attracted by thee, I can vouchsafe with certainty that all these marvellous changes wrought in our souls are due to the influences of thy highest psychic forces alone and that they could have been wrought by no other cause "

Shriman Devat Singh has left behind a most fragrant example of having been a tough fighter with his own low-loves and low-hates and the most successful physician of other souls. During his time he stood unexcelled both in the high souled condition of his inner life and for his achievements in the souls of others. But what did Bhagwan suffer in order to evolve his soul to this stage can be seen from his own letters. We quote some extracts from them :—

" I realised in thy light that as he manifests the ugliest and the meanest condition of life who cherishes ill thoughts and hatred

in relation to his supreme benefactor; so is he indeed worthy of the deepest worship who thinks and endeavours for the highest good of such an ugly and mean soul even when the latter inflicts on his most compassionate heart unbearable pains and shocks. Deeper reflection on, and the clearer realisation of these two most contradictory natures had a divine effect on my heart. On the one hand, thy glorious and, worshipful *Rup* captivated my heart and on the other, my own meanest and most degraded condition in which I cherished feelings of estrangement from thee, filled me with shame. What a hellish picture is mine! Thou dost wish the highest good of my soul. Thou art passing through sufferings to do good to me. And yet in return I prove a source of pain to thee, and even harbour ill-feelings against thee. There can be no blacker and more degraded state of my heart than this. By living a degraded course of life and groping in utter soul-darkness, I developed several low-loves, which I am able to see now in thy unique light—a gift of thy grace. But I feel that the harm done to my soul by my hatred against thee over-balances all the harm done to me by all the other low forces put together. I wish I had realised this truth earlier in life. Even now I have been saved by thy grace, otherwise I do not know into what abyss I would have fallen" (1908).

"When I first accepted thy refuge, I was in a most pitiable state of soul. On the one hand, I was devoid of the feelings of reverence, sympathy, sense of duty, etc.; on the other, I possessed several filthy traits and was forgetful of the favours of my benefactors. When I bring before my eyes the heart-breaking pains that thou hadst to suffer by my such low and filthy state, I feel deeply pained and humiliated. It is thy supreme love for our highest good which has enabled thee to always think of the welfare of the most ungrateful and degraded souls like myself and which has done invaluable good to them in various ways." (1913).

Shriman Amar Singh is the oldest worker of the Dev Samaj and is happily still living amongst us and inspiring us all by the living example of his wonderful loyalty and devotion to the cause of Bhagwan. But his letters tell what it cost Bhagwan to raise him to this eminence. His testimony possesses most important significance. He writes in 1914:—

"Bhagwan! thou hadst to pass through horrible pains and sufferings in accomplishing thy mission to do good to the souls of such degraded and ungrateful followers like myself. Because of thy highest psychic forces, thy heart is acutely shocked by the manifestation of the low forces of our hearts. Yesterday, thou wert pleased to read a letter of a worker of the Dev Samaj. It contained certain matters which were calculated to cause deep anguish of heart to thee It is such low natures that thou hast to constantly deal with. On the one hand, we are not able to desist from going wrong in thy relation or in the relation of others, because of one or other low-love, and, on the other, thou hast to pass through the

fire of suffering because of thy noblest consciousnesses. At this time I recall all those very great shocks which I have given to thee by my low life and feel deeply ashamed of all such behaviour."

Let it be remembered that though these souls have been free from all gross sins and are very noble specimens, yet viewed from the highest standard of Bhagwan Dev Atma even the very noble souls in the Dev Samaj or outside cannot but be the victims of the fascination of the love for happiness. And as happiness and good are not synonymous, happiness-ridden persons are bound to prove, in one way or another, a source of pain and agony to the complete lover of truth and goodness. It is a most remarkable feat of Bhagwan's unique light that it reveals the subtlest sins and hence fills souls, who commit them, with shame and pain. It is only by such an operation due to unique highest influences of Bhagwan that real soul-purification and evolution is possible.

Writes Shriman Gian Dev, the then editor of *Jiwan Tatva*—a weekly organ of Dev Samaj :—

"These days I am breathing in the higher atmosphere of *Dharm Vikasalaya* (Higher Life Training Academy) and I realise thy unique glory. Being a complete lover of goodness, thou art always anxious to do good to all the departments of Nature. Thou art passing very restless life in order to accomplish thy mission of liberating human souls from their destructive low courses of life and evolving higher life in their souls. In this thy unique work thou forgettest thy own comfort, thy own personal happiness, and even the considerations of thy health. But alas! leaving those hundreds of souls outside the pale of Dev Samaj, even those, who live at thy feet, cause tremendous shocks to thy heart owing to soul-darkness, jealousy, vindictiveness, vanity, self-will, etc. What to say of others, even I myself have proved a source of pain and suffering to thee, because of my weaknesses and ignorance. This is not enough. There have been cases of souls whom thou hast saved from various sins and crimes and in whose heart thou hast evolved one or other noble force, but who have turned traitors because one or other low-love of theirs got a set-back. As such, they have grown most ungrateful and deliberately led a campaign against thee and thy cause, in order to destroy thy mission. By such treason and ingratitude, they have wounded thy heart, and thus caused thee deep pain and suffering. It is such satanic behaviour of such ungrateful souls which has often led you to declare the truth that this land of ours has not been able to give thee even one soul whom thou couldst trust in all respects. It is strange, that, even after receiving such horrible pains and shocks at our hands, thou hast not even for a moment given up the task of devoting thyself to the cause of our highest good. Blessed is such a supreme love of thine for the good of others and blessed is thy life-mission. May such inauspicious moment never come in my life when I may lose sight of this *Rup* of thine and desert thy cause. *May thy glorious Rup and thy great favours on me be seared on the tablets of my memory and that I may*

remain loyal to thee and thy cause under all conditions and up to the last day of my life on this earth."

It is extremely regrettable that such noble wish of his did not materialise.

Pandit Dev Ratan wrote in 1904 :—

"I have realised that owing to various sins committed by me, I have inflicted indescribable pains on thy heart. There is no aspect of my life and no turn of my behaviour by which I have not repeatedly displayed sinful course of conduct in thy relation and thus proved a cause of undermining even thy health. As against this I know of no phase of my life in which I have not received incalculable favours at thy hands and have not been blessed with thy most precious and unique light. When I bring all this before me, I realise, on the one hand, the unique glory of thy *Rup* and, on the other, feel an urge that under favourable conditions I may devote the largest portion of my life in writing on and describing thy favours and thy uniqueness and my own sinful life and acts. This is how I mean to struggle to make some amends."

"I felt as if thou wert standing before me and saying :—'Oh thou most degraded and low soul! did you feel no compassion when you stabbed my heart and severely shocked me? Oh miserable being! did you feel no twitch of heart for my old age and weak health? Several times I have told you all, with an anguish of heart, that I have grown old, weak and diseased in the continued and prolonged service of your souls and asked of you whether in such a state you would not desist from wounding me. But oh callous soul and stone-hearted being! you paid no heed to my wail, but on the contrary aggravated my diseases and wounded me still more deeply by adding more to the chapter of your sinful deeds? As against this, even in this state of things I feel pain, because you are miserable and take greater pains still to remove your misery. Oh fallen soul! look at your side of the conduct and look at my feelings for you."

And this same Pandit proved the greatest persecutor of Bhagwan and most ungrateful.

"My Bhagwan! for two hours I was reflecting over this phase of thy life and shedding copious tears."

One of the sons of Bhagwan Dev Atma . . . writes in one of his letters to Bhagwan :—

"To-day in my *Sadhan* I am able to see very clearly in thy light that thou hadst to pass through great struggle and pain in order to liberate me from various evil courses of life and promote my soul-welfare. A series of such incidents have come before me which remind me of how I have, not only on several occasions, sided with my lower courses of life, but have felt annoyed and pained, when, moved by thy supreme love of goodness, thou hadst been pleased to put forth greater efforts to pull me out of them. By such conduct of

mine, I have proved a source of suffering to thee. I have on several occasions, found myself at home with the state of my soul which possesses no hatred for any particular evil tendency, nay loves it, and which is devoid of any anxiety for higher life. Nay, I feel pain for every effort made to get out of that soul state. I have chosen to lie content with my life devoid of higher feelings, because I have found it an uphill task to climb the higher path, and I realise that I possess no power to do so. But I see that my at-homeness with such a deplorable state of soul has been giving great pain to thee. Even now such a state of my soul has been giving thee pain in various ways. But though thou couldst see no satisfactory fruit of thy labours in my life and often witnessed disappointing results, yet it did not cool thy ardour. Nay, all this led thee to struggle still harder. On certain occasions I have been so perceptibly moved by thy unique influences that I have abandoned the lower path which I loved, and have felt compelled to accept the guidance of thy light.

"Such incidents of my life reveal to me very clearly thy unique love for the welfare of others and urge me to lay at thy feet my expressions of the feelings of gratitude for thee.

"There is no doubt that whatever change for the better has taken place in my life, it is solely due to thy efforts. My own condition was, that I felt no uneasiness in living a life totally void of higher feelings (*Dharm Jiwan*) and felt no urge to get out of it. My present anxiety to possess higher life is absolutely thy gift to me. The inherent ability to develop that anxiety is also thy gift to me. I see that in various phases of my life I possess no anxiety to step on to the higher path. But whenever I receive thy unique influences, I feel an impetus to think of my own soul-welfare."

Sh. Dharam Bal ji—the late Principal of the Dev Samaj Higher Life Training Academy and the late editor of the Samaj Urdu weekly *Satya Dev Samvad*—writes in one of his letters to Bhagwan Dev Atma in 1914:—

"Though in the course of evolution thou wert able to evolve in thy unique soul, highest and most blessed psychic forces, and though, led by them, thou wert compelled to embrace thy unique mission, yet sad to say, thou wert not able to get good stuff in souls, and with such poor stuff, thou hadst to carry on thy mission. Dealing with souls possessed of such low stuff and bereft of higher consciousnesses, thou hadst to suffer incalculable pains. But even then thou wert graciously led to apply thyself heart and soul for doing the highest good to our souls. I do not know when the day would come, when the excessive sufferings, inflicted on thee by the conduct of poor souls, like us, would cease. Is it not possible that the evolutionary course in Nature which has given thee supreme place among mankind and evolved the highest life in thee, may in its own good time produce such souls as may turn out to be the true lovers of thy *Dev Rup* and who by assimilating more and more of thy unique influences spread the blessings of thy unique cause in all directions?

Would not such souls appear on this earth who would realise thy unique sufferings and agonies which thou hast to put up with in the daily and hourly work of liberating souls from their horrible evil tendencies and evolving noble forces in them? Would not they realise the beauty of thy supremely goodness-loving soul?"

Shriman P. V. Kanai, M.A., LL.B., also wrote a letter to Bhagwan which is published along with the above letters in Third Part of Bhagwan's unique sacrifices. It was written in 1918 and runs as under:—

"Jiwan Data Bhagwan!

"During my stay at Lahore, I have witnessed two painful facts:—

Firstly, that thou art feeling thyself all alone amongst us and the vast multitude of human beings, because we and others possess nothing in our harmful natures that is common to thy *Dev Rup*; and

Secondly, thy terrible sufferings that thou hast been and art undergoing by our (*i.e.*, mine and of others') weaknesses and failings.

"I know and feel what an amount of deep and loving interest thou takest in our souls; and how humiliating it is for us that, because of our incapacity, we are not able to substantially respond to thy struggles for our betterment."

Shriman Hitaishi Singh, the present editor of our Hindi journal, the *Sewak*, wrote in one of his letters to Bhagwan in 1918:—

"Alas! How deplorable it is that thou hast to deal with blind and incapable souls like me, who, besides possessing lower nature, have not awakened in their soul consciousnesses of higher code of good manners, and who at every step of thy life inflict shocks on thy most tender heart by their sad conduct. Bhagwan! thou couldst find relief from all these shocks and sufferings by abandoning us and thus abolishing for ever the very source of pain. But thy supreme love for doing good to the world makes that course impossible for thee. This is why thou art found ever ready to elevate the life of souls like me who inflict such terrible shocks on thy compassionate heart. My Lord! such supreme love of thine for our welfare is most blessed as it compels thee to apply thyself heart and soul to the service of blind and low souls like me.

"My Bhagwan! I express, on the one hand, my sense of shame and repentance for all such deeds of mine as are due to my vanity and self-will and especially the last act, and on the other, feel wonderstruck how thy *Dev Rup* puts up with all troubles, all pains, all sufferings and I cannot but feel impelled to exclaim 'Blessed art thou my Bhagwan—the complete lover of the good of the world.' This vision makes me pay the homage of my heart to thee"

Sh. Lala Janki Das who was for several years the Secretary of the Dev Samaj and Personal Secretary of Bhagwan and who has afterwards opened a new centre of work in Moradabad, writes in one of his letters to Bhagwan in 1918 as under :—

“In the last few days, I have given thee severe shocks owing to several degrading courses of my life and thus bruised thy most sensitive and tender heart. Alas! being a cripple and a blind soul I had to stumble and fall and bruise my soul, but the pity is that I do not desist even now from inflicting shocks and thus prove a source of extreme pain to thee. But it is thy extreme grace that even then thou wouldst not cast me off, but keep me near thee, in spite of such conduct of mine, because of thy love for my soul-welfare. This most blessed and supreme love of thy heart for our highest good often comes before my mental eye and bends me in homage to thee. One thing that fills me with relief is that not even once has my heart cherished any estrangement from thee. It is my fervent prayer that I may pass all the years of my life in loyal devotion to thee.

“Bhagwan! my false self-love leads me to falsehoods and hypocrisy. During my *Sadhan* for the last several months, I have seen in thy light various phases of this low-love. By means of the *Dev Tej*, I am developing hatred against it. This self-love did not let me develop true humility.”

Sh. S. B., a lady worker of Dev Samaj writes in one of her letters to Bhagwan in 1918 as under :—

“At this time while doing my own *Sadhan* and reading from *Dev Shastra* text on ‘*Upharan*’ (usurpation) I have seen, how, besides proving a sinner and a cause of pain to various existences, I have by such conduct of mine inflicted on thee also, lot of pain. Last year, perhaps in these days, guided by my own self-will, I had not only committed a breach of thy orders but adopted a path which was not straight and which was wrong. By this conduct of mine, I caused thee extreme pain which harmed thy health and robbed thee of the peace and equanimity of mind. By this conduct, I proved a great sinner in thy relation and degraded my own soul I am indeed a great sinner in relation of Dev Atma. I do not know how I shall get freedom from the impurities of this sinful conduct. How wonderfully compassionate art thou! that thou doest wish nothing but good even of such souls as go wrong in thy relation and pain and harm thee, and art ever ready to convey to us thy unique light and unique power and thus ennoble our lives”

Another lady worker of the Dev Samaj (D. P.) writes in one of her letters to Bhagwan as under :—

“To-day I have reflected on thy sufferings, which thou hast been getting at the hands of us low souls every moment of thy life. Thou hast grown old now, thy body is a home of several chronic ailments. Thy heart has been wounded beyond description by the shocks inflicted on it continuously for so many years past.

But alas! owing to our degraded state of soul, thou art not immune from these inflictions and sufferings even now. Since yesterday, my mind has repeatedly turned to viewing this phase of thy life. Leaving the cases of others, when I advert to my own self-examination, I find how in these days I have proved a cause of giving thee pain and shocks by my low conduct. Thou wert pleased to draw my attention to it. I cannot describe how the memory of such conduct has filled me with agony. My undue attachment for my own blood relation made me indifferent to my own good, which came in the way of my psychic communion with thy *Dev Rup*. This relative of mine has developed no desire even for higher life and no altruistic force or feeling of a stable character which might bind him to thy feet. This improper attachment shown by my soul for such a relative is most painful. I deeply repent having thereby led my soul wrong and harmed it by being indifferent to my relation with thy *Dev Rup*. Now that I have come back to this place, I have felt this repentance still more deeply and I feel immensely grateful to thee that thou wert graciously pleased to warn me against treading the dangerous path. Had it not been for thy grace, I could not have seen that I was going on the wrong path. Now I see the path of higher life once more opening before me. I see that the goal of developing *Dev Anurag* (highest psychic attraction for the *Dev Rup* of Bhagwan Dev Atma) is still far far away. I will have to put forth greater struggles and make greater renunciations."

One other worker writes the following significant lines in one of his letters to Bhagwan in the year 1918:—

"It is extremely sad that for the past several years I have, by my blind and sinful conduct, added to, rather than lightened thy persecutions and sufferings. When I bring this photo of my ingratitude before myself, I not only cry shame on myself, but even inflict a fine. I cannot but repeatedly feel indebted to thee that thou hast not only allowed me—a great sinner—to live at thy feet but have endeavoured to impart thy unique light to me which has removed my darkness and made me conscious of my pitiable state, and thus helped me to busy myself in getting true liberty from that woeful and sinful condition. I consider myself singularly fortunate that I am every day getting thy unique influences, and it is my fervent prayer that, so far as may be possible, I may change from this course and prove not only a source of happiness to thee but serve thee."

Why it is that these souls proved a source of trouble and pain to Bhagwan? The reason is simply this. Bhagwan Dev Atma possessed highest psychic forces which were absolutely opposed to all the happiness-based low-loves and low-hates. We human souls are happiness ridden. Most of us develop low-loves of body and bodily comforts, low-love of self giving rise to vanity, self-will and even jealousy, low-love of name, praise, fame, low-love for wife and children, low-love for even honestly acquired wealth and property

etc., etc. These low-loves not only make a man blind to his soul-welfare but compel him to remain contented in that pitiable state. These low-loves incapacitate man from making any efforts to free himself from their slavery as well as from the subjects of this slavery even for the sake of his own soul-welfare. These low-loves keep a man away from developing higher life if he has got any capacity for it. They further block his way for the creation of any awakening in him of the greatest necessity of disentangling his heart from the bondage to low souls and linking it with Bhagwan Dev Atma. These low-loves disable a man from viewing his soul-weaknesses or soul-diseases or sins committed in relation to others, as horrible. Hence they cannot make full amends for wrongs done by them in various relations.

These low-loves make a man disloyal to several higher relations and disqualify him from developing higher sense of duty and discipline. Bhagwan being Dev Atma views every phase of the havoc wrought by low-loves with such a pain as is incomprehensible to us. He sees how souls are made insane by these low-loves and low-hates. He sees how they inflict wounds on him when he goes to save them. But he cannot give up this wonderful task of saving us because he sees us dying and he cannot bear the sight.

Humanity had never had such an experience. None in the history of humanity has witnessed the nature of low-loves and low-hates and their inevitable but horrible results in producing insanity in mankind and gradual decay of the constructive power of their souls which presages their complete annihilation. The entire humanity was and is blind to this terrible fact. Hence they can form no estimate of Bhagwan Dev Atma's anguish of heart when he witnesses how mankind hopelessly drifts to death and in majority of cases resolutely resists all his most compassionate efforts to enlighten and save them. However in time Bhagwan's work is bound to bring a change in human souls by which they would realise the extreme glory of that supreme love of Bhagwan which he possessed for our welfare.

VIII.

BHAGWAN AS A PATRIOT.

The following paragraph had appeared in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for March 1916 which we bodily quote here as it relates to this phase of Bhagwan's life:—

"Bhagwan is the greatest and one of the truest patriots. He feels joy at the rise of his countrymen of any province and expresses and conveys his feelings to his such countrymen by means of letters. If any Indian is raised to any high position in Government service, Bhagwan feels genuine joy. The death of any leader, be he in education or politics or any such line, affects him deeply and he often conveys his feelings of sympathy to the relatives of the departed leader. The papers edited by his *sewaks* also contain invariably such expressions. He feels his land as his own and feels true and intimate relationship with it. *The language that he chose as the language of the Samaj is Hindi.* Bhagwan wrote his authoritative books in Hindi. All the sixteen festivals of the Samaj in various cosmic relations are so timed that they generally coincide with Hindu festivals. All the innocent things of the race and country have been preserved wherever necessary in Samaj. He rejoices in his country's rejoicings and feels pains at its miseries and calamities. But with all that, he is not sparing of his extreme denunciation of anything which he sees shall ruin his race or country even though millions are not able to see eye to eye with him."

When the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, the Marhatta All-India leader died, the Secretary of Dev Samaj sent the following telegram to the Secretary of Servants of India Society:—

"Founder Dev Samaj and his many followers (are) greatly shocked at Mr. Gokhale's untimely demise. In him India loses a good and great political servant and leader."

The editor of the *Science-Grounded Religion* wrote as under:—

"We were deeply grieved to learn the melancholy news of Hon'ble Pandit Gopal Krishna Gokhale's death which took place at Poona, on the 19th February, 1915. By his death India loses a rare and precious gem—a patriot and statesman and a political leader, who held a unique position in so far as he enjoyed great confidence both of the Government and the people. . . ."

Though the Dev Samaj is a society mainly devoted to religious cause, it shares its country's loss as acutely as any body or society in India, as under the guidance of its Founder it feels intimate relationship with India and Indian people.

Let us take another example of a leader of extremist wing, *ie.*,

Mr. Desh Bandhu Das. The following telegram was sent to the family of the deceased by the Dev Samaj Executive Council:—

“The Executive Council of the Dev Samaj expresses its profound sorrow on the untimely and sad demise of Mr. C. R. Das and the heavy loss sustained by the country and conveys its heartfelt condolence to his widow and family in their and nation's great bereavement.”

The editor of the *Science-Grounded Religion* in the body of his note on this melancholy event wrote:—

“Mr. C. R. Das has left indeed a great void not only in the Bengal but in the whole Swaraja Party which is at present the only living limb of the Congress organisation. His intense love for his country, his marvellous sacrifices, his indomitable perseverance to achieve his end, his great powers of organising parties into a solid block, his remarkable generosity and his devotion had brought him within a few short years to the absolute front place in the present day politics.”

These feelings indicate what spirit Bhagwan Dev Atma has infused in his society so far as true patriotism is concerned.

It is because Bhagwan took up strong attitude against wrong things done in the name of politics that our friends of the Congress, in and out of season, declare to the world that we want permanent subjection to a foreign rule and that we do not want *Swaraj*. Bhagwan wrote a booklet on “*Mr. Gandhi in the Light of Truth*,” While reviewing it the editor of the *C. & M. Gazette*, Lahore, wrote something which could be construed that Bhagwan did not want *Swaraj* for his land. On reading that Bhagwan wrote a memorable letter which contains his views on the politics of our land. The letter was also published in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for the month of January 1922 and runs as follows:—

Sir,—I thank you for the review on my booklet, “*Mr. Gandhi in the Light of Truth*,” published in your issue of 20th December, 1921. I however regret to say that the last lines in the review *do not* set forth my *real position clearly* and they can be construed by some people to mean that I am not in favour of *Swaraj*, or that I justify everything done by the British. To avoid these or such other misconceptions that may arise, I deem it my duty to clear up the matter and I trust that in *fairness* to me you will kindly publish this letter in your journal.

I do support most heartily the principle of Swaraj and I do desire that the present Government should become fully responsible to the people of India; but I do consider that the time for full national self-government is not ripe yet, because the most sinister and very wrong forces that have worked dead against the creation and growth of national spirit in India are still there, and they do not show signs of being subdued very soon. These forces are:—

1. *Spirit of religious fanaticism* as lately betrayed by Mopla Mohamedans in Malabar and certain Sikhs in the Punjab.

2. *Spirit of political hatred* betrayed in the riots of Bombay on the 17th November 1921, on the arrival of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, when many of those, who had gone either to see or to welcome the constituted future king-emperor of their country, were assaulted or butchered in cold blood for not boycotting and thereby not showing *disrespect* and *affront* to the prince as desired by the leader of the Non-co-operation Movement.

3. *Spirit of social hatred* which has been in evidence for very many centuries against millions of men of the submerged classes and is at present also shown against men who differ even in political views and whose social boycott is attempted.

4. *Spirit of slavery* to old customs and rites, however opposed they may be to social justice and national progress.

Moreover, *Indians badly lack spirit of democracy* and certain forces of high character *without which there can be no good government by and for the people* on the basis of popular representation. Many Sikhs, Arya Samajists and Mohamedans desire the rule of their own community in India. Even the head of the Non-co-operation Movement has condemned parliamentary government as he says in the book *Indian Home Rule* that he considers "Parliaments as really emblems of slavery." The cry of immediate and full *Swaraj* is in the face of above stern facts merely a *sentimental one* which is very pleasing no doubt to the fancy of many men. On the other hand, I do believe that there are many defects in the present government and that many *grievances* of people are *true* and require to be remedied, but the proper and right way to get them redressed is not the method of *revolution* but the *constitutional method*. Hence on page twenty-five of my book I said, "Instead of trying to upset the whole machinery of the government by the aforesaid revolutionary and harmful method of non-co-operation, the right *evolutionary* and on the whole most sure, beneficial and successful method of attaining full and complete *Swaraj* is:—

(a) by *constitutional agitation*, i.e., by bringing the *pressure of public opinion* on the government which no civilised government, that is established by law, can long ignore to respect;

(b) by utilising the power of majority in the councils as the British do in the parliament;

(c) by promoting educational, industrial and other *constructive work*;

(d) by gradually securing the confidence of both the people and the government by developing in our countrymen those noble traits of character that are essential for good self-government.

May the people of my country follow the above peaceful methods of *ordered progress*, so that better relations be established

between the people and the Government for the good of both, is my earnest wish."

We have quoted in full the whole letter as it gives Bhagwan's attitude towards the political emancipation of our land. This letter was written at a time when Mr. Gandhi had declared that he would get *Swaraj* within a year. Experience has made him wiser and now he declares that *Swaraj* means the evolution of Indian people and no date, therefore, can be fixed when India can get *Swaraj*. The last twelve years' experience has done good to him.

A writer has said that the noblest man is the greatest patriot. Bhagwan Dev Atma, by evolving in his unique soul all the altruistic as well as highest psychic forces of complete love of truth and goodness and complete hatred for untruth and wrong, has laid before the whole world, the highest possible ideal of human life actualised and fully realised. This one contribution alone by Bhagwan is enough, as time progresses, to make India the most respected country in the world. Besides this Bhagwan's monumental contribution of the healthiest and noblest literature to the world is another unique boon. Then he has established for the first time in the entire history of the world a society with a moral basis. The Dev Samaj permits none to become its member unless he is free from at least eight specified sins which include all kinds of flesh-taking, all kinds of intoxicants, adultery, polygamy including divorce, bribe-taking, theft, suppression of debts and deposits, gambling, etc., etc. For the first time in the history of the world, Bhagwan has not only preached but realised the glorious truth in the lives of his followers, that all low-loves and low-hates are diseases of soul and as such, one has to get liberty from them, and that it is compulsory for every man to develop higher forces of character since they evolve his constructive power and thus are the only real possession for man. He has thus made evolution of higher life not something which gets us external rewards and punishments but as a law of our growth, and as such, it has to be fulfilled if we wish well of ourselves. As this consciousness grows more and more in our people, this land of India would in fact be a most sacred and truly civilised land.

We give below a summary of the positive commandments in relation to one's country as laid down by Bhagwan :—

1. Thou shalt realise thy very intimate and close relationship with thy country and countrymen and the imperative necessity of getting freedom from all degrading or evil-producing courses of life in their relation and of evolving all higher or good-producing forces instead.

2. Thou shalt realize greater relation with thy country as compared to thy relation with other lands. And so far as your country is concerned, thou shalt realise nearer relation with your native place than other towns, with your district than other districts, with your own province in preference to other provinces.

3. Thou shalt realise the need of good government for maintaining law and order in thy land, for promoting progress of the people, and also the need of effecting improvement in its administrative machinery.

4. Thou shalt feel true anxiety for the financial, literary, scientific, educational, industrial, commercial and moral and spiritual progress of thy people and the removal of their shortcomings and sufferings in all these lines.

5. Thou shalt deepen thy relation with thy country by acquiring knowledge of its past and present history, by visiting places showing natural scenery and important industrial centres, getting information about its useful products and by studying, as far as possible, the constitution of its administrative machinery.

6. Thou shalt develop respect for the laws of the constitution and administration of thy land, and for those holding official position in the government machinery.

7. Thou shalt help the government in the better administration of the country, help people of every class, creed, caste, etc., to maintain peaceful and harmonious relationship with one another, use *swadeshi* products, try to remove anarchy, stand for the ordered progress of your land and remove any other defects thereof and join, as far as possible, in all good movements for the progress of thy land.

8. Thou shalt, as far as possible, try to perpetuate the memory of all such men and women of thy land who have done some special service either in the political or philanthropic line or helped in the best government of the land.

9. Thou shalt, on holding an office in the government of thy country, try to put down all injustice and cruelty in relation to thy countrymen and promote in all ways their welfare.

10. Thou shalt make adequate amends for any such sin or crime committed in relation to thy country or countrymen of which thou hast become conscious and thou shalt offer best wishes for their good.

Some of the negative injunctions are :—

1. Thou shalt not injure any one of thy countrymen by any improper act of thine.

2. Thou shalt not be indifferent to attaining the knowledge of the history of the constitution of thy country.

3. Thou shalt not help any body in any way in producing anarchy.

4. Thou shalt not be indifferent to the pain and misfortune of thy countrymen, nor shirk offering the necessary and proper help to them, nor be indifferent to the well-being of thy countrymen as far as lies in thy power.

5. Thou shalt not join any school of thought or help it in any way which might lay axe at the root of justice and the good laws of thy country.

6. Thou shalt not help to maintain or aggravate the feelings of ill-will and retaliation between the various communities of thy country.

7. Thou shalt not injure the just and fundamental rights of the people of other countries in order to further the material good of thy own countrymen.

8. Thou shalt not do any unjust or illegal act in relation to the people in thy charge if thou art an official of the State, nor be indifferent to carrying out all right orders of the superior officers of the government or safeguarding the rights of the people against any misuse of the powers by any officer of thy country or doing the utmost benefit to the people of thy country by the exercise of thy legitimate powers as an officer.

IX

BHAGWAN'S RELATION WITH ENTIRE MANKIND.

The following paragraph appeared in the March 1916 issue of the *Science-Grounded Religion* :—

“Bhagwan's sympathies, as the Dev Atma, are deeply humanitarian. On the day that he took his life-vow, he expressed it in a hymn, the purport of the last line whereof was, “May my life be fully spent in the service of the world.” This spirit is amply visible in his writings as well. But I remember one instance which has made indelible impression on my heart. When the present European war broke out and on the occasion of the 64th Birthday Anniversary occasion of Bhagwan, the resolutions in connection therewith were proposed and passed by the Samaj people, the Dev Atma expressed his feelings thus, “Oh ! how painful and unbearable a sight it is for the Dev Atma to see so much carnage going on among the children of man and so much outrage perpetrated on women, children, literature, religious buildings, etc., of others.” I am sorry, I am not able to convey the exact feelings and expression of Bhagwan, but I remember the intensity of pathos which was apparent in his whole expression. This time too (*i.e.*, in December 1915) in a large meeting consisting of about 600 persons good wishes were offered for the speedy termination of the war. He has been, I am told, offering his *Mangal Kamnas* every day for a long time past for the speedy termination of the war.”

In another paragraph, the following few lines appeared :—

“Bhagwan's appreciation of the virtues of others is not confined to his race alone. Its scope is very vast and includes non-Indians or foreigners too. In one of his lectures on *Dev Shastra* while discoursing on the altruistic power of mercy, Bhagwan could not refrain from expressing his great admiration for two Europeans, one of whom was a Deputy Commissioner and the other a D. T. S. The former was going ahunting, when he saw an Indian drowning. He threw aside his gun, put off his coat and boots and plunged into the river without the least consideration as to what fate may overtake him. The latter (*i.e.*, D. T. S.) was travelling in a train the foreman whereof was scalded by the boiling water gushing out from the bursting of an engine-pipe. The pain of the burns was so excessive that he was simply quacking with the writhing agony. While many Indians stood callous spectators to the incident, the D. T. S. had at once oil and cotton brought and by the voluntary help offered to him by Bhagwan and one of his followers who accompanied him, had the bandages applied which soothed the poor victim. This shows that Bhagwan is free from all such narrow prejudices as blind many people to the good traits of foreigners or others.”

It is because Bhagwan Dev Atma could not help singing praises of the noble traits possessed by foreigners that he became the target of mean insinuations and persecutions at the hands of those so-called patriots who consider it a crime not to see everything dark in the lives of foreigners.

It is often the case that patriotism leads to injustice towards other lands and nations. This is because man develops race, colour or other prejudices. These prejudices are the mother of the feeling of hatred. Hatred in its own turn leads man to acts of injustice, crime, wanton wars, etc. And therefore it was a perennial preaching of Bhagwan Dev Atma that hatred for any object or person degrades the man who cherishes it. Bhagwan taught that such hatred was the most fatal poison for every soul. Once addressing his workers, Bhagwan was pleased to say:—

“Low-hate burns like live coal and destroys the very roots of higher life.”

The occasion for such a declaration arose under circumstances which are thus narrated in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for the month of December 1925:—

“A lady member of the Dev Samaj was to return to her duties after having stayed at Solan for some days, Bhagwan had detected in her soul the existence of low-hate which generally springs from egoistic attitude when it is crossed or from the exposure of false beliefs which one holds dear. When she came to take her parting leave, Bhagwan Dev Atma most graciously addressed her thus:—

“Continue the *Sadhans* which you are doing in order to root out the feeling of low-hate. Low-hate burns like live coal and destroys the very roots of higher life. Those who desire to work in the soul-saving department of the Dev Samaj must get freedom or emancipation from every form of low-hate.”

When the so-called God and His sworn missionaries have not unoften qualified themselves in hating those who do not belong to their fold, Bhagwan Dev Atma declares that low-hate is a fatal poison for higher life and higher work.

This is why Bhagwan could not hate any person, be he a foreigner or his own countryman. Nay, he could not help seeing the beauties of noble life in the hearts even of foreigners and feeling grateful to them for any light, he got from them in any department of life. These extraordinary feelings of reverence and gratitude, yoked to the chariot wheels of his complete love of truth and goodness, made his relation with all the kingdoms of Nature simply sublime.

We cull the following from the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for December 1925, which shows what Bhagwan taught regarding the poisonous effects on such nations themselves which try to crush others:—

"The laws of Nature are immutable. If you take poison secretly or openly, in the thick of the forest or in the midst of populace, in any posture whether sitting or standing, in any country—here or abroad—you can, never, never escape its harmful effects. In the same way, if any tribe or class of people, race or nation preserve in their hearts the supremely sovereign place for the acquisition of wealth, land, or power and put in all possible efforts to have and possess them, they cannot have peace, but must come into mortal conflict and run at each other's throats, to annihilate each other and in their own turn be ruined and annihilated. This is inevitable according to the most dependable and immutable law of Nature."

"How painful it is that a man, who cannot bear to see his beloved ones suffering even a pin prick, makes up his mind—under the dominating sway of various low-loves and low-hates—to perpetrate acts of the gravest injustice against others, nay, even to heartlessly slay them."

Bhagwan taught that in ruining others, we ruin ourselves; in hating others, we burn ourselves; while in helping others irrespective of caste, creed, colour or country we help the growth of our own life. Such being the theme of Bhagwan's life and teachings, our relations with mankind are bound to improve and gradually get sweeter and mutually beneficial.

We give below a *summary* of some of the commandments given by Bhagwan Dev Atma in connection with our relation to entire mankind. They are in all about 165 in number and cover a very vast variety of phases:—

1. Thou shalt realise with all mankind most *close and intimate relation*, irrespective of country or nationality, and the necessity of getting freedom from all evil-producing courses of life and evolving all good-producing forces in their relation.

2. Thou shalt show *proper regard* for any person from whom thou hast received regular education or useful training of any kind and for all other persons according to their position in government, society or religion or for possessing any expert knowledge, art or nobility of heart or for age, family or for physical weakness or ill-health.

3. Thou shalt, as far as thy means and capacities permit, *render help* to the poor, the helpless, the orphans, the invalids, the afflicted, the ignorant, and those devoid of higher virtues and higher life; *encourage* those who are engaged in any noble work; *give asylum* to those needing it; rush to the *rescue* of those who have met with any accident on land, in water, or whose houses have caught fire or who have been buried under the debris of any collapsed house; and *make some contribution* with thy physical means or with the best wishes of thy heart, for the relief of the people of any race or country who have been visited by an epidemic or some other calamity.

4. Thou shalt *not take* any thing belonging to any other person by theft, deceit, dishonesty, dacoity, etc., *nor suppress* the debts and deposits of any person, *nor deprive* any body of his just position, *nor sell* thy own children or children of others, nor purchase with money the children of others, *nor rob* any class of people of their just liberty, *nor take life* of any man except when it becomes imperative in the proper defence of your own life or the life of others.

5. Thou shalt *not hate* any person or class of people *on any ground* whatsoever, *nor practise injustice* on any person, nor tender false evidence against any body; nor tyrannise or do injustice to others because they differ from thee in form, features, colour, caste, country, creed or opinion.

6. Thou shalt *wish that peace may reign* in humanity and help to mitigate quarrels and wars, bring about peace as far as possible and avoid improper discussions, disruptions and joking etc.

7. Thou shalt *not refuse* to eat or drink things prepared or brought by any man, except when you find that he is really dirty, diseased or wicked, nor maintain any unfavourable opinion about any man without possessing necessary proof for it.

8. Thou shalt *not be led* by any feeling of revenge against any man or do him any wrong, even though he may have done thee any harm or may be thy opponent; *nor entertain envy* against any man on hearing his due praise or feeling thyself smaller than he, and thereby do him any wrong.

Bhagwan has given as many as seventy-two positive injunctions in this relation on twenty-four heads and ninety-two negative injunctions on forty heads, such as association, talk, profession, relation of guest and host, reliability, borrowing and depositing, keeping promises, performance of duty, giving or receiving any training, sacrifice, discipline, peace, forgiveness, obligation, removing misunderstandings, impartiality, charity, retribution, etc., etc. Their perusal would amply repay the time and trouble. The light that he would get in his conduct towards others would be simply superb. If he moulds life according to these he would prove divinely soothing, soul and a sweet associate.

CHAPTER X. BHAGWAN'S RELATION WITH ANIMALS.

Bhagwan Dev Atma felt a real relation with the animal world. His solicitude for them was therefore immense. He prohibited for all times killing of animals for food, sacrifice, trade or such other purposes. No body in the Dev Samaj can remain a member, if he violates this sacred commandment. Before we give an idea of his teachings let us quote a few instances of Bhagwan's deep solicitude for animals published in a Hindi publication called *Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan ki Jiwan Kathaen*, Part I (Anecdotes of Shri Dev Guru Bhagwan's life). These were translated in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for the months of November 1924 and January and February 1925. We quote them here with some slight changes of construction :—

(1)

"It was the 19th of May, 1903, and the place was Lahore. The day was very hot. Sultry winds blew fiercely for the whole day. Bhagwan Dev Atma's health which was already weak was rendered more feeble by heat. And yet all along the day, he had applied himself to several Samajic duties. He felt, therefore, very tired and feeble. In the evening he retired as usual to the roof of the *Prachar Hall* in Dev Ashram to rest. Bhagwan's cot used to be under a *pankha* which hung from a thick hollow bamboo pole supported on two other poles. In the interior of the hollow pole a beautiful bird had built its nest. It used to enter the hollow pole in the evening to enjoy within its cosy nest its rest, for the night. It so happened that as soon as Bhagwan took his seat on the cot, the bird came to seek its shelter in the pole. But when it saw Bhagwan occupying the cot, it did not venture to fly to the bamboo and enter the pole. It, therefore, flew away and sat on a distant tree. From that distant place it began to cast wistful glances at its nest. Bhagwan happened to observe this. He saw that the bird did not enter its nest because he was there. Out of his great compassion he at once got up from his cot and entered a side room which was fearfully hot at the time, being exposed all the day long to the fierce sun. He did this and suffered all inconvenience just to enable the bird to enter its resting place. Bhagwan had to stay in that room till the bird flew back to its nest. As a consequence he perspired profusely. But he suffered a lot of discomfort in the room so that the bird may have comfort. How elevating is such a solicitude for a small bird shown by Bhagwan even at the cost of his rest, comfort and bodily health. What a contrast to the lives of those thousands of human beings who find satisfaction in injuring or killing any number of innocent birds or destroying their young ones.

(2)

Once Bhagwan Dev Atma was promenading in a jungle. Just by the side of the road, he witnessed a young one of a tortoise

in very debilitated condition and moaning. Its condition was so helpless that it was more than probable that it might fall a prey to some carnivorous beast who might devour it.

As soon as Bhagwan saw all this, he at once stopped. He went towards it and gently took it up and brought it in his carriage to the Dev Ashram. He then made every arrangement for its food, water, place of rest, etc. Many a time during the day, Bhagwan made enquiries about its welfare. During the night, Bhagwan kept it in his own charge in his private room with a view that it may be completely protected from cats, etc. On the next morning, when Bhagwan went out for a walk, he took it with him. He searched out some deep pool of water and put the tortoise in it. The poor animal seemed to feel happy in such elements. He dipped into the water blessing by its mute feeling the great benefactor who had found a safe resting place for it. Bhagwan Dev Atma found comfort in the thought that the little animal was safe and out of danger.

(3)

The month of *Vaisakh* was about to expire. The season was getting oppressively hot. That was the time to arrange for *pankhas*. One was to be fitted in the room occupied by Bhagwan. The hole in the wall through which the rope for pulling the *pankha* had to pass was occupied by sparrows which had built their nest there. Bhagwan was apprised of this. He surmised that the sparrows might have simply collected sundries to build their nest. But he learnt that the nest was already built and the young ones had been hatched out of the eggs laid by mother sparrow, only a day or two previous. They were, therefore, too young to fly. The difficulty was how to protect these young ones as well as to make the hole available for the rope. After some thinking, Bhagwan ordered that the whole nest may be removed intact with young ones quite safe and placed in a basket which was to be suspended by a rope from the roof and kept hanging just near the hole but a little on one side. This plan not only ensured the safety and comfort of the young ones, but gave their parents better and more suitable place to bring them up. For some time Bhagwan anxiously observed whether their parents reached the basket—the new place for them. The sparrows came. But they flew towards the hole and searched for their young ones there. They did not think of the basket which was suspended above the hole. Bhagwan ordered the basket to be lowered to the level of the hole. This scheme proved successful. The sparrows saw and recognised their young ones in the basket. They flew towards them and commenced their further nurture. After this the basket was raised higher near the roof. The sparrows went there as before. When any of the parents brought food for the young ones and sat on the edge of the basket it moved like a cradle of a baby. This was how they began to be brought up. When the young ones were able to fly, they were taken out of the basket by their parents. Thus the lives of the young ones were saved and they were nourished in a far more comfortable place in comparison to the hole in the wall from where they had been removed.

(4)

It was at Montgomery that an incident occurred when Bhagwan once went out for a walk towards a jungle. On the way and at some distance Bhagwan saw a bird sitting comfortably on the ground. Bhagwan thought that if he went that way the bird would be disturbed. Hence he changed the direction altogether and went by a foot-path on the side opposite to that where the bird sat.

(5)

The station of Solon lies just midway on the cart road between Kalka and Simla. It is on this road that one would witness hundreds of cows being taken every month for being slaughtered at Simla for the use of the beef-eaters. This road curves round the foot of the hillock at Solon on which is situated Bhagwan's Parbat Ashram. Hence whenever Bhagwan saw hundreds of cows being driven on the road for the Simla slaughter-house, he received a deep shock and felt great pain. Alas! millions of human beings residing on this planet, though civilised in many other respects, betray, owing to their meat-eating disposition, far more degrading nature than even the beasts of prey. Lion is a blood-thirsty animal and often it is that it pounces upon a cow and feasts on it, but he can at least say that he has received no favour at its hands. But look at man. He lives on the milk of the cow, subsists on things made from milk like ghee, butter, curd, cheese etc., and brings up his begotten children on cow's milk. If in spite of all these favours that he receives from cow, he chooses to slaughter it or gets it slaughtered to satisfy his low palate, is he not decidedly worse than the carnivorous lion? Again when vegetable world provides variety of food-stuffs for man and under legitimate limits man can have plenty of milk from animal world, is it not extremely unjust that man should kill any animal or destroy the eggs of any bird for food or trade, or sacrifice them to satisfy any mythical god or goddess in accordance with their mythical commands or inflict any other injury on them? When in the process of evolution, man grows higher consciousness against sins, this grievous sin too would vanish from this earth.

It was in the month of August 1907 while Bhagwan was staying in his Parbat Ashram at Solon, that one strange incident occurred in this connection. Bhagwan went out as usual for a walk with *Mata Pujniagi* (Bhagwan's noble consort). On the way, he saw a herd of cows, being taken to Simla. Several cows among the lot were very young, strong and also attractive to look at. Some of them had their calves also with them. The fate that awaited all these most innocent creatures touched Bhagwan to the extreme. He gave expressions to very painful feelings and offered deep good wishes for their welfare. The whole day long, Bhagwan remembered them and expressed deep anxiety for them. It was a wonderful coincidence that after a few days that very herd of cows was returning from Simla in the custody of some other men. Bhagwan was surprised to see them and asked one of these men if these cows were the same that had been taken to Simla only three or four

days back? "Yes," the man replied. "They would surely have been slaughtered by this time if they had not caught the sympathetic attention of the old Maharaja of Nabha. He took pity on them and purchased the whole lot for three thousand rupees. In obedience to Maharaja's orders, we are taking them to Nabha." This filled Bhagwan's heart with extreme joy that his most sacred wish for them was realised.

(6)

One afternoon in the winter of the year 1905, Bhagwan Dev Atma went out for a walk. While taking a stroll in the Lawrence Gardens a piercing cry of some bird in pain at some distance reached his ears. It deeply moved Bhagwan's compassionate heart. His entire attention was diverted to that. He left the main road and hurried towards the place from where the cry of pain proceeded. There was a cluster of trees and by the side of one of them lay a parrot writhing in pain. Bhagwan examined the poor suffering bird. He found that it had been wounded by some hunter. The poor creature had bled much. It was rendered helpless. It could not fly. This sight pained Bhagwan considerably. Bhagwan took out his handkerchief and endeavoured to take it up with a view to do for it what was possible under the circumstances. The parrot mistaking this merciful act, as some further violence to his body, tried to cut Bhagwan's hand with its beak. However Bhagwan, not caring for what the bird did in ignorance, succeeded in lifting it up. He then brought it to Dev Ashram. Here Bhagwan critically examined the wound which unhappily was too deep, besides too much blood had been lost. The handkerchief was soaked with the blood. Bhagwan got the medicine applied to its wound to stop the blood. Thereafter it was put in a cage. One person was deputed to look after its wound and also feed the poor parrot. But sad to say that too much bleeding had played havoc on the poor bird's strength and it expired the next day.

(7)

What an attitude Bhagwan bore even to poisonous reptiles is illustrated by the following anecdote published in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for the month of December, 1925 :—

"Bhagwan's standing orders are that we have no right to take animal life unless it be in pure self-defence. These orders do not extend only to such of the animals as are innocent and useful like reptiles goat, sheep, cow, buffalo, etc, but they extend to such reptiles also as are popularly understood to be poisonous, such as serpents etc.

An incident occurred at Solon which very clearly illustrates, this. A big snake was found in the open yard of the kitchen. As soon as a cry was raised that a snake was there, people rushed there to kill it. When Bhagwan saw some men running with *lathies*, he enquired where they were going so fast? He was informed that a big snake was found in the yard lying in front of the kitchen. Fearing that his men may not kill it, he grew very uneasy and at the pitch of his voice—which indeed is a voice of thunder—he asked

the men to desist from laying violent hands on it. The snake was accordingly left safe and driven far off.

When all gathered together, Bhagwan was graciously pleased to tell us in a voice charged with pain :—

“You ought to know that man has *no right* to take animal life on any the slightest pretext or on only the remotest chance of danger to his life from it. On mere supposition that serpent is an enemy of man, you have no reason to kill it, unless in reality it does attack you or any other person's life. There are human beings who lead wicked lives. We do not hang them on the mere supposition or unproved data. So when, you find a snake or any other harmful animal, you should, either drive it beyond the habitation of man or allow it to run away by itself. The serpent has also a right to live so long as it does not prove itself dangerous to you or somebody else's life.

The noble spirit of true Ahinsa is permeating Bhagwan's this expression.

These instances can be multiplied. We give below a summary of some of the commandments of Bhagwan in relation to the animal world :—

1. Thou shalt *realise thy most intimate and close relationship* with the animal world and the necessity of rooting out from your heart every harmful course of conduct towards them and evolving all good-producing feelings in their relation.

2. Thou shalt try to *gain as much right and good knowledge* about the various animal existences as possible, and by reflecting on the beauties of the outer form and inner qualities possessed by the various animals, thou shalt try to *grow a feeling of nearness and love for them*.

3. Thou shalt *reflect on the good traits* possessed by certain animals such as innocent play, smartness, courage, cheerfulness, industry, economy, organisation and discipline, far-sightedness, monogamy, concentration, etc., etc., and try as far as possible to assimilate them in your own character if you do not possess them.

3. Thou shalt try also to *assimilate certain higher virtues* possessed by certain animals such as unselfish bringing up of children, gratitude, sense of responsibility, mercy, etc.

5. Thou shalt leave no stone unturned to *carefully look after* such of the animals as you have domesticated and to whom you owe a duty. Thou shalt give them nourishing and suitable food at proper times, suitable place of abode making allowance for seasons, proper exercise in open light and air, wash their body of any dirt or filth, protect them from germs of various kinds which harm them, keep their place of abode and their receptacles of food very tidy and clean, and above all give them proper help, food etc., when they grow old or become incapacitated, till they die.

6. Thou shalt *get them properly treated* during their illness.

7. Thou shalt *take* work from your animals only *to the extent of their capacity* and not more, and give them proper hours of rest.

8. Thou shalt *express thy kindness and love* for thy domesticated animals. Thou shalt every day keep a part of your meals for the benefit of the animal world, keep a vessel full of water for animals or birds in general in some part of your house if and wherever practicable, render medical or other help to the suffering animals even though they do not belong to you; establish, if possible, or help in the work of a hospital for the benefit of animals in general; an asylum for the old, aged, infirm and neglected innocent and serviceable animals; and, if possible, adopt ways and means to improve the breed of useful and serviceable animals.

9. Thou shalt have a *right to destroy the disease-producing germs which make their abode in man's body* or the body of a useful and serviceable animal and also of striking at or even killing any small or big existence of the animal world in defence of thy own person or person of others, or in defence of useful and serviceable animals and even agricultural produce, etc.

10. Thou shalt *make adequate amends* for any sin committed in relation to animals, of which you become conscious and shalt offer good wishes for them.

XI

BHAGWAN'S RELATION TOWARDS VEGETABLE WORLD.

Bhagwan felt a sort of close kinship with the vegetable world and the most tender regard he manifested in its relation is very touching. In the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion*, several anecdotes were recorded which were passed by Bhagwan Dev Atma himself as correct. We give below some of them :—

(1)

It was in the month of October last (*i.e.* 1915) that the writer went to Lahore to attend the series of those most remarkable and illuminating lectures which Bhagwan was most graciously pleased to deliver to his humble followers on the most momentous problems of soul-life. One evening he saw several persons engaged in washing clean the outside wall of the Devalya. There was one *sewak* definitely deputed to keep watch over an ivy plant taken down from the wall and at that time lying just near the passage by which others had to pass. The duty of that *sewak* was to see that it was not trampled upon by persons who in their indifference would not notice what lay there. It seemed that the life of that plant did not make such appeal to that *sewak's* heart as to make him alert in his watch. Bhagwan noticed this lack of sense in the *sewak*. Bhagwan's awakened highest consciousness with regard to plant life, which impelled him not only to feed the plants in his charge, but even to protect them whenever possible, could not let him rest. He went to the place where the *sewak* was standing, took the ivy up, placed it in the arms of that *sewak* with an admonition to be more careful and then graciously spoke as under :—

“As a rule, men are blind or indifferent to plant life. They would walk over this ivy plant without a feeling. Have you not observed young boys plucking the leaves of the plants without any useful purpose? Have you not observed men plucking fruits from a tree with an unnecessary rude handling, breaking twigs and branches or even good stems? This ivy plant of mine, that you see, has been existing under my protection for the last twenty years, and I want that its life should be prolonged as much as possible.

“So appealingly did the master speak that from that day a consciousness has awakened in the writer in relation to plant life to avoid unnecessary injury to them as far as possible.”

The following anecdotes appeared in the Hindi book. They were translated and published in the columns of the *Science-Grounded Religion* for the months of September and October 1924 :—

(2)

A duty was laid upon a *sewak* in the Dev Ashram that he should decorate the Worship Hall with flower-pots after he had tidied it and spread carpets on its floor. Once it so happened that the

flower-pots which were placed in the Worship Hall were not watered. After the meeting was over, the *sewak* in charge took those out and put them in their original places. He left them unwatered as before. While Bhagwan was going for his daily walk, when he witnessed the withered state of the plants. This pained him considerably. The man in charge was at once called, and addressing him Bhagwan said: "You and some others, possessed of like nature, have been seeing these plants. But as you possess no living relation with them, you could not notice their withered condition. Hence you neither felt pain at this starved state of plants, nor felt an urge to remove their want. They have been making a mute but an eloquent appeal to you that they are dying of thirst, but your insensitive heart could not make a response. These plants have, by their beauty, adorned the place where you sit to have your religious *Sadhans*, and thus carried to your hearts good influences. But in return for the service that they did to you, you did not even move so much as to water them and thus quench their thirst. In absence of higher consciousness, how selfish and callous a man proves even in relation to those that serve him."

(3)

The magnificent and highest psychic feelings which the Dev Atma cherishes in relation to various kingdoms of the universe are truly marvellous. It was in the winter of 1913 that Bhagwan was putting up in a bungalow at Lahore. In those days, he was once pleased to visit Dev Ashram on some business. The incident which happened then is thus described by a *sewak* :—

"My Bhagwan !

In the month of January last when thou wert pleased one day to grace the Dev Ashram with thy presence, and thy glance fell on the plants which were lying there in a withered condition, thy heart was deeply shocked by the sight, and forthwith I observed thee busying thyself with thy own hands removing the grass from the pots and the dry and withered leaves of the plants and thus giving them a beautiful look. Not only that, but thou wert pleased to summon to thy presence some *sewaks* and ordered them to remove the old clay from the beds of the flower-pots and put fresh one there. Then all these were arranged in order. Thus placed in new order they changed the outlook of the Ashram. We are so many persons who are living in this place for the past several months. We did see their condition but that did not appeal to our irresponsible heart. They even went from bad to worse, and yet we were unaffected because of the absence of requisite higher consciousness in our heart. Thou wert pleased to visit the Ashram only for a short while and their distressing state made a strong appeal to thee and within a few minutes their condition underwent a remarkable change for the better. Blessed indeed is thy such glorious feeling for these mute creatures.

(4)

It was in the month of *Magh* of the year 1966 B. when Bhagwan was temporarily putting up in a bungalow of some gentleman in Lahore. In those days an incident happened which is recorded in Bhagwan's diary and which is as under :—

"There is one *berry* tree situated just adjacent to my kitchen in this bungalow but outside its compound. I saw one day a man climb over the tree and begin mercilessly to cut down its fresh and green branches perhaps for his goats, and by such indiscriminate hewing of the tree he made its look ugly and deformed. This pained me very much. While the man was dealing blows one after another to cut down the branches without the least regard as to how and what he did with the tree, my heart was correspondingly receiving shocks and pains. I am sorry that I had no control over the man or the tree and hence I had no other go but to suffer in silence the pain thus caused, while the man did to that tree what suited his heart."

(5)

Bhagwan Dev Atma as usual went for a walk in Lahore. His only daughter who was then hardly aged five was also with him. Bhagwan took her to a grain field by the road-side and pointing to one grain plant showed her how and under what conditions the plant grew grains. He further showed her its leaves and flowers and also the pods containing its seeds from near it. He was very anxious to show her how the seeds grew in the pods but as the field belonged to some one else, Bhagwan did not pluck even a pod as that meant a loss, however small, to another person. While returning home, he found lying in the way a plant with pods containing seeds of grain in them which he at once picked up. He broke one pod took out a seed and gave knowledge to his daughter regarding it.

Such instances can be numerously multiplied. However we give a summary of the commandments which Bhagwan has given in relation to the vegetable world :—

1. Thou shalt realise the most intimate relation with the vegetable world and the fact that various existences of this kingdom suffer or benefit to some extent by the evil or good conduct of others towards them.

2. Thou shalt realise that by adopting improper conduct towards vegetable world, thy soul-life gets harmed, and hence there is an imperative obligation on thee not only to get free dom from all soul-degenerating courses but to evolve all good-producing feelings in relation to this world.

3. Thou shalt *evlove* the sense of beauty in thee by carefully observing the beautiful leaves and flowers of various plants and ivies,

etc., and create and deepen in thyself a desire to make thy life sweet, fertile and fruitful by contemplating over the organised existences of trees which yield sweet, juicy and beneficial fruits. Thou shalt try to gain useful knowledge of various kinds regarding this world according to thy capacity.

4. Thou shalt *make proper use of the various products* of this world for thy food. Thou shalt benefit by the use of non-injurious products of this kingdom for the removal of thy diseases and of any scent or fragrant flowers for some good purpose according to your capacity. In order to remove some proper need or for the good of thyself or of any other man or animal thou may cut any plant or tree wholly or partly.

5. Thou shalt *grow and develop love for the useful part* of the vegetable kingdom by reflecting over the services that it renders by providing grains, leaves, roots, flowers, fruits, barks, scents, pulp, juices, threads, shade and wood, etc., etc. In case thou possessest the sense of beauty thou shalt repeatedly observe the enrapturing form and delightful colours of the beautiful flowers and leaves of various plants and trees, and decorate with them thy body, thy dwelling-place and thy sanctuary, etc., with good intention and thus grow and deepen love for its beautiful side.

6. Thou shalt by repeatedly reflecting over the manifold favours done to thee by any of the plants of this kingdom *develop feeling of gratitude* in relation to them.

7. Thou shalt take all possible measures to *protect and serve* the garden, orchard, flower plants, trees, vines, crops, etc. which may be in thy charge. Thou shalt as far as possible keep in your house some flowers, plants and serve them or keep and maintain an orchard or garden out of love for this kingdom.

Similarly, there are many negative commandments in relation to this kingdom which are to be observed.

BHAGWAN'S RELATION TOWARDS INANIMATE KINGDOM

It will be a news to the world that man degrades his life by any improper behaviour in relation to inanimate objects even." Bhagwan teaches that we are deeply and closely related to this kingdom. We are under an obligation to reflect over the favours we receive from this kingdom and to feel indebted to it, and we must as a consequence of this indebtedness serve it. The relation that man, as a rule, bears to this kingdom is of usurpation and callous indifference. As laws of life are immutable, the life of such souls naturally gets degenerated and callous. The one thing which harms the soul-life of man beyond measure is selfishness, as it is the mother of all unjust acts. When the outlook of man on life is that of one who wants to wring out of others as much as possible and give as little to them as possible, we must expect all sins and crimes and all undue and avoidable heart-burnings, bickerings, hatreds and consequent ruinous disharmony. The only way to get out of this rut is to develop higher consciousnesses in relation to all the various kingdoms with which we are most intimately connected.

Now let us see what Bhagwan teaches about our relation even with the lowest, i.e., inanimate kingdom. We give below as usual a short summary of the main commandments from *Dev Shashtra* which are in all 24 positive and 20 negative ones:—

1. Thou shalt realise to a sufficient extent the *most intimate relationship* towards the mineral kingdom, and not only get freedom from all degenerating courses of life, but develop all higher consciousnesses with regard to it.

2. Thou shalt, as far as possible, apply thyself in the work of *gathering knowledge* about the various existences of this kingdom, its inorganic forces, the solar system and the subtle solar system called *Pañlok*, where souls dwell after leaving this body, in an identical but finer body.

3. Thou shalt, as far as possible, *dwell in a dry, roomy, dirty and clean house*, which admits full light and air through sufficient doors, windows and ventilators, fitted in it for the purpose, and *keep a separate place* for throwing useless or dirty water; *reserve a separate and clean accommodation* for natural needs; *wash clean* with plenty of water all the drains; and as far as possible reserve separate rooms for dining, receiving guests, sleeping, study, etc.

4. Thou shalt use at proper times and in *proper manner* clean water, pure air, light and sunshine.

5. Thou shalt keep all the things of thy house neat, clean, beautifully decorated and in their proper order and *prolong their life* as much as possible by using them carefully.

6. When thou wishest to build any house, temple, *ashram*, hospital, office, tank, well, road, etc., etc., thou shalt build it in most beautiful shape and efficient way so as to best serve the purpose for which it is meant.

7. Thou shalt always *keep thy heart above the harmful attachment* to wealth, land and other property which thou mayest earn by thy own labours or inherit from others.

8. Thou shalt *repeatedly reflect over the innumerable favours* that thou receiveth from the earth and the moon, the sun, and the air, and develop feeling of gratitude towards them all and, as far as possible, contribute thy powers in their service.

9. Thou shalt on developing consciousness of having harmed any of the existences of this kingdom try to *make adequate amends* in order to purify thy heart and offer best wishes for their good every day.

We give below two incidents of Bhagwan's life showing how he felt his intimate relation with this kingdom :—

(1)

On the 30th December, 1910, Bhagwan Dev Atma went for outing towards the Zoo. He found there that some one had opened the Municipal tap, but after having met his requirements had left it open and thus the water was being wasted. This waste troubled Bhagwan very much and he at once went and closed the tap though in doing so the sleeves of his coat got wet.

(2)

Sh. Janki Das records his personal experience of Bhagwan in this connection :—

"The proud privilege that I possess of remaining at the sacred feet of the Dev Atma enables me to observe various incidents illustrative of his unique life. As Bhagwan feels great shock when an undue injury is being inflicted on any existence, human, animal or vegetable, in the same way, he feels deep shock when he sees any injury being done to any existence of the inanimate world too. There are scores of such incidents of Bhagwan's life. However, I record one.

Some time back tar-coal was being painted to the T-irons in the roof of the room adjacent to Bhagwan's kitchen, and I was appointed to supervise that work. The painter while painting let few drops of tar-coal on the floor and thus spoiled it a good deal. This did neither touch me nor the painter. After a short while Bhagwan came there. The spoiled condition of the floor at once caught his sight and he felt very much pained and out of this pain he spoke as under :—

"According to the teachings of true religion, it is *wrong for any man to do undue injury to any object in Nature whether animate or inanimate. If any one does so, he degenerates his soul. Hence in*

order to adopt harmonious relations with the various kingdoms of cosmos it is indispensably necessary for every soul to possess higher senses.

This opened my eyes, and, on the one hand, I saw the lack of higher senses in me and, on the other, felt deeply reverential to Bhagwan's *Dev Rup*.

It is these sin-destroying and higher life-evolving unique forces that keep the Dev Atma in constant struggle to do good to others. It is because he is equipped with *Dev Shaktis* that he is Dev Atma.

As desired by him we washed the floor clean of these drops."

CONCLUSION.

In the above pages we have tried to give a very brief outline of the practical life which Bhagwan Dev Atma lived in various relations. As it is not possible for men of every shade of intelligence or development to get a philosophic view of Bhagwan Dev Atma's highest teachings about soul, it is highly probable that the incidents of the daily life of Bhagwan, as given in this book, may convey in some measure to even an ordinary man the glory of his life and may serve as beacon light to them in the pilgrimage of their everyday life.

As Bhagwan Dev Atma was endowed with the highest psychic or divine forces (*i.e.*, *Dev Shaktis*) of complete love for truth and goodness, and complete repulsion for untruth and wrong, it had become absolutely imperative for him to pass every moment of his wakeful life not only in eradicating the reign of untruth and wrong, but in taking all possible measures to establish the cause of truth and goodness. He, therefore, not only wrote hundreds of original publications but took other practical measures as well to promote the cause of truth and goodness. If all the incidents of the life of Bhagwan, which took place in his most benevolent activities as manifested in doing the highest services to various kingdoms of nature, had been collected, they would have formed a most precious treasure of knowledge and inspiration for all mankind. But as that was not done, even the few instances that have been collected—a few out of which are given in this book—are bound to benefit all those fortunate souls whom the ideal of soul-knowledge and soul-evolution can appeal. Our labours will bear a rich fruit if this book helps fit souls in the pilgrimage of higher life.

